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DISSENT at Thirty

Michael Walzer

The first issue of *Dissent* appeared 30 years ago this month. Some weeks after reading it, I went home from Brandeis University, where Irving Howe and Lewis Coser were then teaching, and told my parents that I didn't want to be a lawyer, I wanted to be an intellectual. I don't think that I told them that what I really wanted was to be a *left-wing* intellectual. For some of us, at least, those were heady days.

The image of the '50s as a nonpolitical time is only partially accurate. It was not a time of mass movements or of visible social unrest, but in the history of political ideas and ideologies the years that stretch from the debate over McCarthyism to the North Carolina sit-ins were both important and exciting. What is today called neoconservatism has its authentic origins in those years. Faced with the New Frontier and the Great Society, the conservatives went into hiding, went underground—at a time when the symbolism of the underground was seized and exploited, inappropriately, by the left—only to emerge, somewhat soured and occasionally rancorous, after the '68 elections. But the deep structure of conservative thought in a liberal society, market ideology at home and hard-line anticommunism abroad, was first put together in the '50s. And partly in response to McCarthy, and the Cold War, and the conservative celebration of American capitalism, a new kind of leftist thinking also had its beginnings in the '50s—most importantly, though not only, in the pages of *Dissent*. This was a leftism liberated from the Marxist sects of the Depression years but without, for the moment, any sort of popular base: a critical and worried but also an engaged and adventurous leftism.

It is often said that *Dissent* in its first years sustained the socialist tradition through a bad time. That was, I suppose, one of the purposes of the founding editors. But early readers and young writers like myself had a somewhat different view. I thought that what was going on in the magazine was the re-creation, even the reinvention of socialist ideas and the reestablishment on new (non-Marxist) grounds of the democratic commitments that the left had honored, too often, only in the breach. Article after article stressed the crucial importance of democracy, civil liberties, oppositional politics, citizen activism, decentralization—themes that opened the way for, and played into, what was soon to become the more or less official ideology of the New Left, participatory democracy.

□

If democracy was the positive argument of those years, mass society was the "critical theory." It was a pessimistic theory, but for me it was exhilarating. Reading the descriptions of mass society, I first learned the explanatory power and the intellectual temptations of a general proposition. All those people, politically apathetic, wrapped up in their private lives, eager consumers, watching television—didn't I know them? hadn't I grown up in an American suburb, the unexpected home of the masses?—were now accounted for. Mass society was the liberal (and infinitely preferable) version of totalitarianism: in the one case radical atomization, in the other radical mobilization. Both theories, I now think, told more than the truth. In *Dissent*, we demonstrated our disbelief in both of them, or our reluctance to believe, by the eagerness with which we looked for and celebrated every sign of resistance to tyranny in Eastern Europe and of political activism among oppressed or excluded citizens in the United States. The Montgomery bus boycott was more joyously welcomed and more deeply reflected upon in *Dissent* than in any other American magazine, and it was literally on the first day of the black student sit-ins, in January 1960, that Irving Howe telephoned to ask me to go down to North Carolina. What I found there was nothing at all like a mass society. Nor was the national response to the sit-ins all that apathetic.

Much of the reputation of *Dissent*, even today, is shaped by our own response to the new leftism that grew out of the early civil rights movement: the

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student populism, the *narodnik* passion of SDS. We were too critical, it's often said; we failed in sympathy and understanding. I would feel easier about this view if I thought that our sympathy and understanding could have altered the end of the story. In fact, we played the role we should have played: we provided a forum for ideas, programs, controversies. The Port Huron statement was written largely out of our pages, and we vigorously debated the theory and practice of community organizing, printing supportive as well as critical pieces. Those were days of meetings, negotiations,

Those were days of meetings, negotiations, polemics, friendships made and lost. Localism and participation always had their advocates in *Dissent*; I was one of them (and in an important sense still am). Perhaps for that reason, I was slow to see the destructive tendencies endemic to populist politics—whose protagonists "go to the people," ideology in hand, more ready to represent their own convictions than the actual men and women they encounter. Soon enough, the New Left produced its own vanguard and then its rival vanguards, at war with one another and with all the rest of us. Without the Vietnam War, the worst forms of revolutionary posturing and political violence would probably have been avoided. Still, the critical pieces turned out to be right and, even among solid citizens on the left, the messengers were blamed for the bad news.

□

One of the greatest political virtues is the readiness to do the same things over and over again. It is a virtue that one begins to respect at about 30, and *Dissent* at 30 embodies it—we have little choice. It is as necessary now as it was in the '50s to make the case against conservatism, and if the world is harder for conservatives these days, it is harder also for democratic socialists. It is still necessary to explore, hopefully and skeptically, the possibilities for a leftist renewal. What should our vision be? our program? our organizational structures and strategies? Curiously, the intellectual legacy of the New Left of the '60s—a result more of its social location than its political inclination—is a kind of academic Marxism, sometimes lively and enlightening, sometimes scholastic and wearying, focused more on the past than the present or future. We have not published much in that mode; nor should we; there are other leftist magazines. Our task today is what it has been: to carry on the democratic argument, to watch for signs of popular activism and insurgency, to struggle with the dilemmas of choice and policy. Someday, there will be a newer left, and we will be supporters and critics: intellectuals still. □

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Irving Howe

Grenada: 'Twas a Famous Victory!

One thing is clear beyond the shadow of a doubt: the United States has the military strength to defeat Grenada. Everything else being said in defense of the invasion last fall is, at best, dubious.

The claim that the invasion was a rescue operation to save American students is no longer taken seriously by anyone. Had the students been in real danger, an Entebbe-style landing and pickup would have been sufficient. We know, as Anthony Lewis has written in the *New York Times* (11/1/83), that "Grenada and Cuba both sent urgent messages to the U.S. saying that our citizens . . . were safe. We know that the [Grenada] airport was open and that Americans flew out the day before the invasion. . . ." Clearly, the Reagan administration had no interest in pursuing peaceful alternatives to its "rescue."

The next justification was, in Reagan's words, that Grenada was becoming "a Soviet-Cuban colony being readied as a major military bastion to export terror." Here, too, there is no sufficient evidence to support this claim. What was found on Grenada was a good number of obsolete rifles plus some up-to-date (but by no means "major") military equipment. Senator Daniel Moynihan, not exactly a dove, said: "Nothing has been discovered so far that would show with any certainty that Cuba was planning to take over Grenada." Nor has anything been discovered since Moynihan's statement.

□

What sense does it make to speak of Grenada as a "major" bastion of the Cubans? In what way would a base in Grenada help the Cuban-Soviet bloc more than a base in Cuba itself? We find support for our skepticism in an unlikely source, Prime Minister Thatcher of England:

> You may say that the Americans should not have this in their backyard. But look at the map. See how far Grenada is from America, then look how close Cuba is to the United States. Well, Cuba is a much bigger danger, isn't it? You don't go into Cuba because you don't like Cuban attitudes. But you go into Grenada because Cuba is there. Can you not see the point?

Yes, we can. But suppose the Cubans were putting arms on Grenada. Is that in itself a sufficient reason for invading Grenada? The whole world is ringed with military bases set up by the two superpowers. By the logic used to justify the Grenada invasion, would not the Soviet Union also be justified in "taking out" American bases in Greece or Turkey that, from its standpoint, are at least as great a "threat" as any bases on Grenada would be to the U.S.? In this wretchedly polarized world we must accept—at least until negotiations can change this—the fact that both sides maintain scattered bases as close as possible to the other side. Unilateral actions by either superpower can be dangerous, though of course in some circumstances, such as during the Cuban missile crisis in the early '60s, action may be necessary—and even then President Kennedy negotiated first, achieving his purpose without the use of military force.

But that's not the way the Reagan people think. They wanted a quick kill.

The argument that the invasion was designed to bring democracy to Grenada by removing a gang

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of what Reagan called "left-wing thugs" can best be answered with a Bronx cheer. That the Coard-Austin group, which killed Prime Minister Bishop, was a gang of thugs I don't doubt; nor would I put forward Bishop as an exemplar of democracy. But there is a profound hypocrisy in American statements on this score. The United States has found it possible to live on friendly terms with such vicious right-wing dictators and juntas as Duvalier in Haiti, Pinochet in Chile, the military murderers in Argentina, El Salvador, and Guatemala. Very much to the point are some remarks by Hendrik Hertzberg, editor of the *New Republic:*

> The claim that the invasion's purpose was to restore order and promote democracy is . . . basically phony too. Order and democracy in Grenada, like disorder and dictatorship in Nicaragua and Guatemala, are incidental to the Administration's main purpose, which manifestly is to reassure itself and to show the world, especially the Cubans and the Russians, that the U.S. is not a pitiful helpless giant . . . but a lean, mean, right-wing fightin' machine. . . . Sheriff Reagan whirled and fired to his left, and this time he got lucky; he hit a bad guy. But if he'd hit a good guy, I suspect he'd blow the smoke from his six-gun with the same satisfied smile. . . . This is not a man we can trust to choose our enemies.

Shortly before the coup that deposed him, Bishop made overtures to Washington in the hope of improving relations. There was talk that the deal might include a turn to "pluralism" within Grenada. But the Reagan regime turned a cold shoulder to Bishop, thereby weakening his position at home and enabling the takeover by the Coard-Austin gang. Had Washington responded to Bishop, it's at least possible that both the Coard-Austin coup and the American invasion might have been averted.

Let me make clear that I do not write as a pacifist or isolationist. There are some—*extreme*—circumstances when intervention in the affairs of another nation can be justified, morally and politically. For instance, intervention in a country where genocide is taking place (Cambodia under Pol Pot). I think one can/should argue that any intervention in the affairs of another country is inherently a violation of democratic norms, yet that such an act can, in *extreme* cases, be justified by overriding security and/or humane concerns. That Grenada constituted such an instance seems highly implausible.

Politically, the most disastrous consequences of the Grenada episode will be felt in South and Central America. Even those Latin American countries that are friendly to the United States have condemned the invasion. More important—if you remember the dismal history of U.S. intervention in that area, usually in behalf of thuggish military regimes and sometimes the United Fruit Company, you can readily see how Grenada will prove a propaganda advantage for all those in South and Central America—not only on the left—who wish to paint the United States as simply an imperialist overlord.

There is the further danger that the Grenadan "success" will inflame the White House roughriders who propose direct and indirect military intervention in Central America. Grenada today, Nicaragua tomorrow? It's not an inevitable sequence, but the possibility increases.

□

There remains the absurdity—perhaps one should say the obscenity—about all the talk that Grenada has shown "American will," "American firmness," etc. (This makes a modicum of sense *only* if you see Grenada as a rehearsal for other, larger invasions.)

What in fact did we show the world? That a military superpower can take over a hapless Caribbean island? Is American self-esteem so low that it requires this sort of reinforcement? Put aside self-esteem and consider the once-lovely American sense of humor. Just imagine what Mark Twain would have said about pouring all those troops and planes onto Grenada. For that matter, what he would have said about so many other events in the time of Reagan. □

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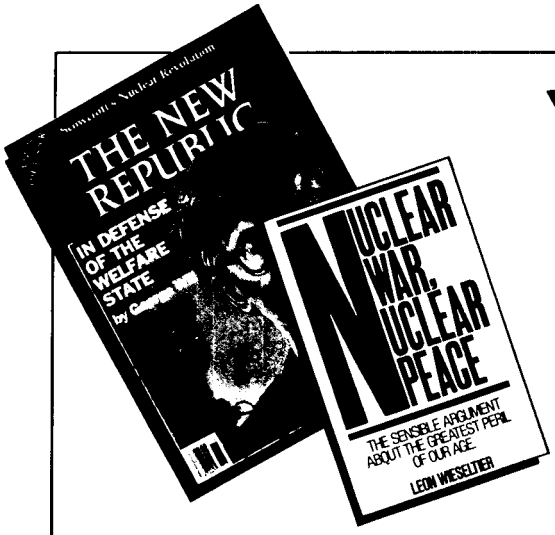
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Joseph Clark

A Coalition Is Forming

There's a Newspeak definition of "special interests." In Reaganite language, the 97 percent of the American people whose income is less than $50,000 a year are the "special interests." They menace the administration of the country by Adam Smith's invisible hand and Ronald Reagan's visible voodoo economics. This was highlighted when House Democrats sought tax relief for those making under $50,000 rather than for the 3 percent who make more; they were assailed by the Reaganites for hitting the "middle class."

The Newspeak use of the term "special" interests performs wondrously when confronted by political leaders who seek a coalition of labor, farmers, small business people, women, blacks, and Hispanics. After eliminating all duplication, these population categories must comprise about 97 percent of the country. But many journalists, who should know the populist origins of the term "special interests," persist in Newspeak. Walter Mondale and most of the other Democratic aspirants for the presidency were attacked for basing their campaigns on appeals to "special interests."

When Harding, Coolidge, and Hoover presided openly as representatives of the real special interests—even to the point where they couldn't see anyone but Andrew Mellon for the Treasury—the combined impact of the invisible hand and trickle-down economics (the new variant is called supply-side) brought us the Hoover Depression of the 1930s. Coalition politics was born in a successful effort to replace government of, by, and for the special interests with an Administration that would have *some* regard for the public interest. The latter, Roosevelt reminded us, included the "forgotten man at the bottom of the economic pyramid."

Coalitions in America are fluid and varied. Say "New Deal coalition" and one automatically thinks of labor, liberals, farmers, women, and minorities. But in 1932 "Roosevelt had not even bothered to make a major labor speech," Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr. reminds us in *The Politics of Upheaval.* And in 1932 NAACP questionnaires addressed to both Hoover and Roosevelt brought replies from neither. Eleanor Roosevelt's efforts, Joseph P. Lash recalls in *Eleanor and Franklin,* "to bring the Negroes' plight to the attention of her husband and his cabinet colleagues—even some of the liberals among them—was a lonely enterprise." Northern blacks still voted for the party of Lincoln in 1932, and organized labor (the AFL) made practically no contribution to the Roosevelt sweep. But the 1936 election was dramatically different. John L. Lewis, Sidney Hillman, and George L. Berry (of the printing pressmen) announced the formation of Labor's Non-Partisan League for the reelection of Roosevelt. David Dubinsky and Emil Rieve (of the hosiery workers) resigned from the Socialist party to join the campaign coalition. Money and campaign workers were among labor's most important contributions.

There also was a massive and long-lasting shift in the black vote between 1932 and 1936. Those white racists who were circulating pictures of FDR and, especially, Eleanor Roosevelt as "Negro lovers" contributed "to a historic shift in Negro voting allegiance from the party of Lincoln to the party of the Roosevelts," Lash writes. Small, but hitherto unheard-of steps were taken in the second New Deal, including the appointment of a black woman as a deputy director of the National Youth Administration.

The Roosevelt coalitions always included the Democratic party political bosses and their machines. But even these sometimes sordid instruments changed by 1936. Boss Joseph Guffey in Pennsylvania made the labor unions his stronghold, and New Deal liberalism was also adopted by bosses Ed Flynn of the Bronx and Ed Kelly of Chicago. FDR's pressure to get Jimmy Walker's hand out of the till in New York and off the

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Tammany rudder ultimately resulted in the alliance of Mayor Fiorello LaGuardia with Roosevelt's New Deal.

Still another ingredient of the New Deal was not large but influential—the intellectuals, or eggheads. Schlesinger describes a conversation between FDR and his adviser Judge Samuel Rosenman shortly after the 1932 election. Whom shall we consult? the President asked. Both agreed: not the business interests or politicians. They had had their chance and had fallen on their faces. Rosenman said: "My idea is this: why not go to the universities of the country? You have been having some good experiences with college professors. I

André Brink

Dilemmas of the Afrikaans Writer

André Brink is a leading South African writer, one of the courageous group that has spoken out against racial injustice. The author of such novels as Looking on Darkness, A Dry White Season, *and* A Chain of Voices, *he has twice been awarded the most important South African literary prize, the CNA award—the only author to receive it both for Afrikaans and English work. In 1980 he received the Martin Luther King Memorial Prize. The article that follows is taken from Mr. Brink's new collection of critical pieces entitled* Writing in a State of Siege, *copyright © 1984 by André Brink, and published in the United States by Summit Books, with whose kind permission it appears in our pages.*

Mr. Brink has written that in selecting the essays for his book, he found that "a world where more and more violence is solving fewer and fewer problems makes the writer not less, but more, necessary."

— Eds.

If the position of the English writer in South Africa is unenviable, it is at least unequivocal: his work is banned. Not all of it, of course, but if the case of Nadine Gordimer can be regarded as indicative, certainly the most accomplished, the most *effective* work by an English writer is liable to be banned. At the very least there are no qualms in the minds of the authorities about banning English works: these writers are traditionally regarded as enemies of the Afrikaner—so what else can be expected of them? The Afrikaans writer, on the other hand, still has the uneasy knowledge that although the authorities loathe his guts, no official action has been taken against an Afrikaans book (yet). But does that imply that the position of the Afrikaans writer is more safe and secure than that of his black, brown, or white compatriots writing in English? The matter is not so simple.

Even though an English writer may be denied a local market he is still affiliated, through language and culture, to a large Anglo-Saxon world in which he is allowed to exercise his true function as a writer. On the other hand one should have no illusions about the spiritual agony of a writer whose works are kept away from the people for whom he has written in the first place: Nadine Gordimer's banned *The Late Bourgeois World* should primarily be read by South Africans.

The Afrikaans writer has so far been allowed to publish his work in his own country—or *some* of his work, for the public is not aware, I think, of the formidable and growing power of prepublication censorship applied by most of the larger publishing firms with political affiliations. I think—I hope—that no really good Afrikaans novel will ultimately fail to find a local publisher; but that is really only the beginning of the struggle, which is basically a struggle against lies and the denial of justice.

From one point of view it seems unnecessary to pay too much attention to some of these "organizations" acting in the name of Christianity or Nationalism or, preferably, both: surely they are no more than the pathetic and desperate crusades of angry old men? In this brand of conservatism, it may be argued, it is simply the immemorial conflict between old and young that is revealed with particular violence and bitterness. These self-appointed leaders invoke the magic and mythical *volk* as the mainspring of their fulminations, the *raison d'être* of their sound and fury—but is the *volk* really concerned with it? Or are most people simply amused by Christian Cultural Action Congresses and other gatherings that reveal very little Christian love and only a distorted sense of culture?

If resistance against younger Afrikaans writin were confined to small men and little groups i would, indeed, have been unnecessary to dwel too long on it. But these actions appear as the mere symptoms of a much deeper problem, and they are intimately linked with the unprecedented strife and infighting and backbiting rocking Afrikanerdom at the moment—clashing political ambitions, turmoil in the Churches, cultural and industrial conflict, etc.

Politically, the Afrikaner is in power. During the first half of the century the mere struggle to gain that power kept Afrikaans-speaking people together; an Afrikaner was automatically a supporter of the Party and a member of one of the

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think they wouldn't be afraid to strike out on new paths just because the paths are new."

FOR A LONG TIME, conventional wisdom, some of it on the left, had it that the New Deal type of coalition now was strictly something in the past. What was being confused was a need for new ideas—in both the economy and foreign affairs—with the obvious and natural alliance required for progress on the American political scene—of labor, liberals, farmers, ethnic minorities, and, more than ever before, women, blacks, and Hispanics. And, lo, as though ordained, the political air has been filled at least since the 1982 elections with talk of

three "Sister Churches" (even though these weird Sisters didn't always reveal much brotherly love). Once political supremacy had been achieved, however, the natural differences characteristic of all societies inevitably began to assert themselves. Unfortunately this is happening at a moment when South Africa is particularly vulnerable in the eyes of the world: if Afrikanerdom crumbles, the entire edifice of our society, it is argued, may be ruined. That is why those in control of State, Church, or organized culture insist that the present is no time "to reason why," but simply "to do or die," which accounts for the extraordinary vehemence of their reactions.

In this society the Afrikaans writer occupies a strange and important place. It is not yet a century since the First Language Movement began to promote Afrikaans as a language; the first Afrikaans poem of some literary merit was written a mere 60 years ago. In other words, in the minds of probably the majority of Afrikaners, the writer is still supposed to exercise the function he had in a society at the very beginning of its evolution. He is supposed to encourage the solidarity of his people and to promote their group identity—as was expected of Homer or the narrators of the *Nibelungenlied*, of Afrikaner pioneers, or of the writers of Soviet Russia or Red China. In the meantime, however, the world has changed utterly and within the international cultural society the writer, including the Afrikaner, has a different function altogether. Both artist and scientist belong, as Goethe said two centuries ago, to humanity as a whole. In spite of the vicissitudes in the life of a nation it is the duty of the writer to probe beneath the surface, to pose dangerous questions, to discover essential human truths.

Of course this may turn the writer into the notorious "gadfly of society"; of course this makes him obnoxious to the conscience of the political leader who works with common denominators rather than with individuals: but that is his duty. Without that, society stagnates.

Now this is exactly the function of which our authorities wish to deprive Afrikaans writers, not realizing that the result would be that blind stampede of springboks into the sea in search of salt evoked in Opperman's moving poem, "Springbokke." When Etienne Leroux dares to reveal some of the flaws and follies of South African society in *Seven Days at the Silbersteins*, all possible pretexts from the ethical to the linguistic are used in an effort to discredit his work. If younger writers dare suggest that morality involves more than "Yes, Baas," marriage, and family prayers, or that love is a metaphysical experience transcending the adoration of a *princesse lointaine* or some amorous gropings in a farmhouse, or that modern society is urbanized and involves rather more than the traditional afflictions of farmers, or that politics has a larger spectrum than Nationalism, our works are proscribed and their authors ostracized. And the onslaught is not restricted to the rantings of self-appointed popes of morality, or to an avalanche of letters to the press, but extends to the radio (by refusing younger writers any opportunity of explaining their views), to schools (by forbidding children to read younger writers), to churches (by intimidating printers and publishers). An insidious campaign against liberal trends in younger writers strives to persuade the nation that they are also heralds of communism—and in this way a climate is slowly created in which, it is hoped, this young, flourishing literature can be stifled.

It is all so unnecessary. A book that fails in its exploration of significant patterns in society and in the relationships of individuals is doomed to die—whether attacked by the puritans or not; and a truly good book will inevitably survive, in spite of all attempts to kill it, just as *Madame Bovary* survived, or, in our time, *Doctor Zhivago*.

The danger is that once a climate is created in which Afrikaans works can be banned as easily as those in English, the Afrikaans writer may be forced to find other markets, like Pasternak: for the writer does not only write, but writes to be read. The English writer banned in South Africa still lives on in an English cultural tradition abroad, however painful the silence imposed on him at home: the Afrikaner may be uprooted more completely. If he is good enough, he will survive. But the price will be paid by his country. And it is a price this young society cannot afford. Already a danger point is drawing near. And if our culture is to flourish—if it is to survive at all—South Africa will have to make room for gadflies and bees in its smug little garden. □

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such coalitions. It seemed to come spontaneously from the grass roots. It's hard to say who was the "vanguard" in putting coalition politics so squarely on center stage. Each constituency played a role. For women, NOW became both a mass movement and a slogan. It grew increasingly influential as its political tactics became more sophisticated. NOW reached out for coalition partners. It concentrated political activity in the 1982 congressional elections in a way that widened the celebrated gender gap between Republicans and Democrats. The right wing had calculated—wrongly as the 1982 elections showed—that social issues involving family planning, birth control education, and free choice for women would cut in favor of Republicans and conservatism. But Jesse Helms and his constitutional amendments were large factors in the defeat of right-wing candidates in 1982. It seems to me that the most powerful political cartoon in many years was one showing a Jesse Helms-type senator in bed between husband and wife who look very unhappy about it all.

A good case can be made for labor as the largest and most effective participant in the revived coalition. For the hundreds of thousands who demonstrated in Washington on Solidarity Day, September 19, 1981, there were startling indications of new trends and new ideas in the labor movement. This included the alliance and participation of the organized women's movement; NOW and other women's groups played an official part in the Solidarity Day program. Similarly, the NAACP and other black organizations participated and gave added emphasis to the large black and white participation in that demonstration.

The biggest innovation of all is the decision of the AFL–CIO to participate directly and actively in choosing the Democratic candidate. Despite misgivings expressed in some quarters, it seems clear that the labor movement has become part of the political process in this country to a greater extent than ever before. At a time when it is so difficult to hold on to the gains of the past decades and when "give back" has become the employer slogan, it is nevertheless labor that will provide the sinews of political action as never before. Between the AFL–CIO and the National Education Association more trade unionists are bidding to become part of the active political process than ever in past history. In addition to the coalition policy that has been invigorated by the trade unions, there is a technological and organizational foundation for labor action that surpasses previous efforts. Computers work for labor, not only for their employers; and labor has a bigger membership, not to speak of larger grievances, in industrial states ravaged by the Reagan recession—states in which a belated economic upturn leaves mass unemployment and high interest rates.

PERHAPS, WHAT'S MOST NEW and potentially most productive is the new direction of the civil rights movement. The electoral path has been chosen by the black leadership and the black community as the way to a just share of political power. The harbingers were the municipal elections of Chicago and Philadelphia and to an extent in Boston. All indications are that not only will some 90 percent of the black voters vote against the Reaganites but *that for the first time in history millions of eligible voters who haven't voted before will turn out this time.* That's what happened in Chicago, and it began to happen in Illinois long before it attracted national attention. Growing dissatisfaction among Illinois blacks with President Reagan's demolition of affirmative action brought about record registration drives. Then came the election of Harold Washington as mayor of Chicago, with the addition of hundreds of thousands of new black voters. And it also included—as in Philadelphia and Boston—alliances with white liberals. Above all, it included alliances with trade unions and Harold Washington's staunch support of labor policies. Especially active in the Washington campaign was the local contingent of AFSCME.

What's crucial for 1984 is voter registration and turnout. Still another minority, the Hispanics, second only in size to the blacks, has an even lower record of past participation in the electoral process. The frequent examples of division between blacks and Hispanics have often been noted. Former congressman Herman Badillo has pointed out that where a concerted effort was made to unite them, Hispanic voters joined blacks as in the Chicago election. More important, he said, "It is Reagan who will unite black voters and Hispanics against his policies and for change in November 1984." The potential is there, as Governor Romero-Barcelo of Puerto Rico wrote recently. Let the record show, he said, "that low voter turnouts by Hispanics have not been a tradition in all parts of the United States. A remarkable exception is Puerto Rico, where—though we cannot vote for president or for U.S. senators and representatives—we have almost 100 percent registration and . . . a 1980 participation rate of 78 percent in our islandwide elections."

THERE IS ONE OTHER constituent of the coalition that may be a sleeper but the decisive factor in the

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elections next year. You could see it in the making on June 12 last year in Central Park. It was a rally against the nuclear arms race that brought together three-quarters of a million people in the largest demonstration ever held in this country. Obviously, the people concerned about war or peace in the nuclear age cut across all lines of class, race, sex, and occupation. President Reagan's early bandying about of the possibility of fighting and winning a nuclear war made a deeper and more worrying impact than is generally credited. And his use of American forces for direct intervention in support of El Salvador's junta and for the overthrow of the Nicaraguan government has played no small part in the national unease about the prospects of peace. Surely the unprecedented gender gap between Democrats and Republicans is explainable in part by the issue of war or peace.

One sometimes hears an amiably sectarian voice on the American left telling us that whichever Democrat runs against Reagan, he (the Democrat) won't have a program fully satisfactory to socialists or even to people in the labor and liberal movements. Of course! But does any serious person really think it would make no difference whether the next president of the United States is Ronald Reagan or a Democrat? Does anyone on the left, or in liberal circles, suppose that proposals for social reform are likely to receive the same kind of response from a Reagan and a Democrat?

The conclusion I propose is that, as things look now (toward the end of 1983), the coalition that first came together during the New Deal days has—of course, in new and varied forms—shown itself to be alive and well.

□

THE ABOVE WAS WRITTEN before the terrorist slaughter of 230 Marines bedded down in a single headquarters in embattled Beirut, and before the invasion of Grenada. As is usually the case after such events, the short-term impact was favorable to the president. This was enhanced by Reagan's unprecedented action in barring reporters from the scene of action so that the "news" could be properly laundered. The long-term effects of both Beirut and Grenada can only contribute to the bankruptcy of the Administration's foreign policy, which relies excessively on threats of war or, if the country is small enough, on military intervention. Beirut and Grenada will add to the general unease about the Reagan foreign policy and the fear of Armageddon that it inspires. □

Louis René Beres

The Lie of "Crisis Relocation"

To implement its provocative nuclear strategy, the Reagan administration has embarked upon an expanded plan for civil defense. This plan calls for the "temporary relocation" of people from high-risk areas to "safer" ones in periods of intense international crisis—that is, periods when nuclear war seems imminent. Although the reasonableness of relocation has been dismissed by virtually the entire scientific and medical community, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) will spend $4.2 billion on Crisis Relocation Planning (CRP) over the next seven years.[1] The avowed purpose is to double the number of citizens who could survive a nuclear war.

Even under the conditions of the heaviest possi-

[1] Information about FEMA is drawn from: FEMA film on nuclear preparedness, screened before a Hearing of a Subcommittee of the Committee on Government Operations, U.S. House of Representatives, April 22, 1982, *Hearing Record*, pp. 5–6; FEMA, *Attack Environmental Manual*, chap. 1, "Introduction to Nuclear Emergency Operations," CPG 2–1A1, May 1982; FEMA, *Materials for Presentation on Nuclear Civil Protection*, P and P–2, September 1980; FEMA, *A New Impetus: Emergency Management for Attack Preparedness, FEMA–1*, June 1980. (All government documents.)

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ble attack, FEMA claims that "95 percent of our land would escape untouched, except possibly by radioactive fallout." Curiously, in another of its own assessments FEMA arrives at significantly less optimistic (and more realistic) expectations. Here FEMA acknowledges that if the Soviet Union "were to mount an all-out attack on the United States with their present strategic forces . . . almost the whole population would be located less than 100 miles from at least one nuclear detonation." This means that virtually every American would be within range of serious radiation exposure, and about half the U.S. population would be involved in direct weapons effects.

THE IDEA OF "CRISIS RELOCATION PLANNING," dating back to the 1950s, was endorsed by the Carter administration in 1978. Until recently, however, the Federal Emergency Management Agency received only small budget increases for the evacuation program. Spurred on by the awareness that the Soviet Union is apparently spending $2 billion annually on civil defense and planning to protect 110,000 key government officials in hardened blast shelters, FEMA now seeks to do its part to close a different sort of "window of vulnerability."

What exactly does FEMA have in mind? Since Soviet civil-defense measures, it alleges, might limit Soviet fatalities from a U.S. retaliation to the "low tens of millions," these measures could undermine deterrence by upsetting the balance of *mutual population vulnerability.* But surely, a rational Soviet adversary, in deciding whether or not to launch a first strike, would not base its decision on the prospect of *relative* advantage. It would decide on the basis of predicted damage to itself. Even if the U.S. population were perceived as substantially more vulnerable, a Soviet first strike—in order to be cost-effective—would always have to rest on the expectation that it would prevent any significant U.S. reprisal.

There is no reason to believe that the Soviet Union could entertain such an expectation. The widely cited CIA 1978 study on the subject, *Soviet Civil Defense,*[2] notes that Soviet blast-resistant shelter space is designed to protect only 110,000 government and party leaders, and that these shelters are vulnerable to direct attack. The study also points out that for the Soviets to protect the 12–24 percent of the total work force left behind after crisis relocation, the remaining space per person in each shelter would have to be limited to less than one square meter. And even if the shelters were psychologically tolerable and capable of withstanding the effects of blast, their occupants would stand little chance of surviving suffocation, heat, fallout, and starvation.

What about the Soviet citizens who would be evacuated? Here the promise of CRP is even more limited than it is for the U.S., since the Soviet Union lacks a developed highway system to link outlying regions to the industrial hub. Understanding this deficiency, Administration civil-defense planner T. K. Jones claims that Soviet evacuation plans call for 17 million urban residents to walk 30 miles and then build their own shelters![3]

The CIA study *Soviet Civil Defense* concludes that "Under the most favorable conditions for the USSR, including a week or more to complete urban evacuation . . . , Soviet civil defense could reduce casualties to the low tens of millions." This conclusion is based on a scenario involving an attack against exclusively high-value military and economic targets. Hence the Soviet population is assumed not to be deliberately targeted, and only a single U.S. retaliatory strike (immediately following a Soviet first strike) is assumed.

It follows, as the report itself proceeds to indicate, that casualty levels would be far greater if (1) the U.S. attack were to take place during evacuation; (2) the attack were larger; (3) it were protracted and sustained; (4) it were directed against populations as such; (5) the evacuation were chaotic.

American plans for CRP are based more on "monkey-see-monkey-do" logic than on a well-reasoned assessment of risks and benefits. An obviously flawed assumption of evacuation plans is the idea that the United States would have several days to evacuate its "high-risk" areas during a period of rising tensions. This assumption contradicts another premise of current nuclear strategy—that we need to improve our nuclear strategy so that it can provide protection from a Soviet *surprise* attack.

Another flawed assumption underlying CRP is that a government-directed civilian evacuation in the face of nuclear war would not degenerate into chaos. Notwithstanding its highly detailed instruc-

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[2] The CIA study *Soviet Civil Defense*, released July 1978 by the CIA director, is available as a "Special Report of the Department of State," no. 47, September 1978.

[3] For assesments by T. K. Jones, see *Industrial Survival and Recovery After a Nuclear Attack: A Report to the Joint Committee on Defense Production, U.S. Congress* (Seattle: Boeing Aerospace Co., November 1976).

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tions for the secure transport of currency, credit cards, and sanitary napkins (and its prohibition of firearms, narcotics, and alcohol in relocation areas), our government can hardly expect that a mass exodus from the cities could take place calmly and expeditiously.

Consider FEMA's plans for a continuity of critical services in the risk areas. To make such continuity possible, key workers would not be asked to remain in risk areas. "They would be advised to relocate, with their families, to nearby, closer-in host areas—from which the key workers would *commute* [emphasis in original] to their jobs on a two-shift or similar basis."

One more flawed assumption of CRP is that relocated populations would survive. Even if evacuation could be accomplished without widespread confusion and panic, there is no reason to believe that "host areas" would be relatively free of radioactivity. As to FEMA plans for dealing with such radioactivity, it has embarked upon a program to construct and distribute "ventilation kits"—manually operated ventilation devices "to improve both total survival and the ratio of uninjured to injured survivors."

What sorts of structures are envisioned by FEMA for installation of such kits? Suggesting such improvised shelters as an "outside trench," "outside lean-to," and "boats," FEMA assumes that citizens will have followed prior instructions concerning transport of tools to host areas. With such tools, evacuees can exploit the principal element of personal defense after a nuclear war—*dirt:* "One fallout-protected space can be developed by moving (on the average) about one cubic yard of earth (about 70 to 100 buckets full of earth)."

In the absence of normally functioning health-care systems, people with chronic illnesses would be especially vulnerable, even assuming they were successfully evacuated, while fractures, burns, and lacerations would go untreated. Coupled with greatly heightened incidence of both disease and psychological trauma, medical problems surely would be aggravated by the overwhelming number of rotting corpses.

RATHER THAN BUILD upon the understanding that a nuclear exchange with the Soviet Union would totally shatter the fabric of American society, our leaders have decided to spread the news that nuclear war can be tolerated. Ignoring the fact that even the small Hiroshima bomb inflicted so enduring a level of destruction that survivors have experienced what Robert Jay Lifton calls "a permanent encounter with death,"[4] these leaders have opted to support the feasibility of civil-defense measures. And this despite the fact that a nuclear war would bring not only death, but meaninglessness.

In 1965 the Department of Defense sponsored a competition involving designs for fallout shelters in shopping centers.[5] Today, the U.S. Postal Service plans to distribute Emergency Change of Address cards following a nuclear attack on the United States. "This postage-free card," says the Service's Emergency Planning Manual, "would be used by displaced survivors of an attack to notify the Postal Service of their emergency mailing addresses."

Many have laughed at the idiocy of such plans for relocation. But the plans are offered without comic intent. How can this be?

THERE ARE SEVERAL ANSWERS that come to mind, none of them particularly heartening:

- One answer is *opportunism.* The development of strategic myths in the Reagan era is a growth industry. Throughout the corridors of selected think tanks, Babbitt caricatures turned scholars have discovered that there is both fame and fortune in the encouragement of strategic machismo. It seems a small matter that their recommendations are unassailably erroneous. They sell!
- A second answer is *thoughtlessness.* And I am not using the term in the ordinary sense, that is, a lack of caring, but rather the meaning ascribed to it by Hannah Arendt—the literal inability to think. Wherever one turns today in the Reagan administration, one encounters a marked incapacity to deal with a complex reality. Substituting gibberish for what is known, the Administration seeks—by vast rhythmic repetition—to make relocation palatable. Instead, it is only making thinking impossible.
- A third answer lies in the *anesthetized nature of strategic thinking.* By dealing only with abstractions of flesh-and-blood reality, the Administration has lost sight of the concrete character of a nuclear war. Just as an individual's repression of the fear of death can impair the prospects for self-preservation, so has the Administration impaired prospects for U.S. survival by insulating itself from reason-

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[4] See Robert Jay Lifton, *Death in Life: The Survivors of Hiroshima* (New York: Vintage, 1967), and Robert Jay Lifton and Eric Olson, *Living and Dying* (New York: Praeger, 1974).

[5] For the DOD document on shopping-center fallout protection, see Department of Defense, *Winning Designs for Fallout Shelters in Shopping Centers*, Office of Civil Defense, H–13, October 1965, 20 pp.

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able fears of collective disintegration. Although it is true that the fear of death must be tempered in both individuals and nations lest it create paralysis, to deny the effect of such fear altogether is to make the threat of extinction more imminent.

• A fourth answer is *psychopathology*. It is altogether possible that the advancement of falsehoods in the face of overwhelming contrary evidence is a function of schizophrenia. Needless to say, this sort of answer is fraught with difficulties, but it ought not to be dismissed out of hand.

In offering this explanation, I am aware, of course, that the definition of "schizophrenia" has varied greatly throughout the course of modern psychiatric history and that today's community of psychiatrists shares no greater unity of view about this syndrome than its forebears. Yet our present concerns do not call for clinical specificity.

• The fifth answer explains the contradictions in current nuclear strategy in terms of the Reagan administration's *infatuation with apocalyptic symbolization.*

With its plans to "prevail" in a "protracted" nuclear war against an "evil empire," the Reagan administration's nuclear strategy now resembles a scheme for the final eschatological battle. Since all apocalyptic belief is a way of overcoming what Mircea Eliade calls the "terror of history," this strategy issues from a desperate need for order. Unwilling to be confused by an array of facts, the Reagan people turn to the apocalypse as an alternate form of "understanding." Reason is crushed by such a force.

In this sense, America's current nuclear strategy has a strange affinity to certain ancient Hebrew writings that were found in caves near the Dead Sea. By its preparations for an apocalyptic war, it resembles the Qumran text called *The War of the Sons of Light and the Sons of Darkness*. While the Scrolls declare that God, with his human and celestial partisans, will do battle against the forces of Belial, the Administration envisions a conflagration between secular superpowers that are the embodiment of good and evil.

In its picture of Last Things, Jewish tradition, concerning the final conflict, identifies the adversaries of God primarily with the unrighteous elements among humankind, the heathen who serve Belial (the Prince of Darkness). To prepare for this conflict, *The War of the Sons of Light and the Sons of Darkness* offers a precise plan, and it conforms to that time's standard Roman patterns of military organization, procedure, and strategy. Reagan's plans for fighting a nuclear war are similarly specific. Described in portions of a 125-page document leaked to the *New York Times* in spring 1982, this five-year military program for the United States envisions precise cycles of moves and countermoves that might take place over an extended period of time.

According to the Scrolls, salvation was to come only after victory in the struggle against the iniquitous Sons of Darkness. Although current American nuclear strategy has never consciously sought a nuclear Armageddon, several of its principal exponents have fantasized publicly about its near inevitability and even its long-term benefits. And while no one in the Administration has suggested that a postapocalyptic world order would be anything but catastrophic, they have suggested, to repeat, that "survival is possible."

Though attached to this world, such suggestions do not really belong here: there is something nonterrestrial about the Reagan people's formulations. Their invitation to finality is merely a memory projected into the future, a nostalgia for distant imaginings of redemption converted into public policy. But it is their fate, even as they aspire to happiness, to encourage only necropolis.

Nonetheless, as in all apocalyptic thinking, President Reagan's nuclear strategy holds out hope for the suffering righteous. It is, of course, only a small matter that survival is not possible in a nuclear war. God is on our side.

THE UNITED STATES has been thinking against itself. To survive into the future, it will require leaders who can open their minds to ways of understanding not yet their own. Instead of advancing arguments that are nothing more than the pure product of artifice, mumbled again and again, these leaders will have to establish a lucid perspective on our current policy failures.

A nuclear war cannot be considered a continuation of politics by other means. Even Clausewitz, hailed by current *Realpolitiker* as a fountainhead of their thought, surely would find any identification of nuclear war with rational policy abhorrent. Clausewitz always cautioned that any use of force be considered with a view to the overriding "political object." Where the use of force could only be injurious to that object, it would have to be dismissed as a rational option. Until we begin to stand *within* the arena of mortality, picturing ourselves as victims of total annihilation, we will be unable to ensure our survival.

The fear generated by our look at the futility of relocation must lead us away from that bloodless

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brand of "realism" that is so dear to the strategic mythmakers. Instead of sanitized think-tank analyses of the effects of nuclear conflict that reek mightily of unreality, we must begin to prevent the "unthinkable" by highlighting its overwhelming and irreversible human costs. Such notions as crisis relocation are dangerous to the cause of peace not only because they are unforgivable lies, but because they convert the currency of nuclear warfighting into valid coin. □

Richard Appelbaum, Peter Dreier, Michael Harrington

A Faded Dream: Housing in America

When the War on Poverty began 20 years ago, housing was one of the major battlefields. The concern then was with the reality of slums in the midst of affluence. For middle-class Americans, it was a time of economic growth and buoyant optimism, symbolized by a dramatic boom in middle-class homeownership. Today, the growing plague of homelessness across the nation reminds us that housing still is a major problem for the poor. But it is now also a problem for the middle class, which no longer can afford the American Dream. Indeed, it has become rather a nightmare: rising costs, shrinking space, an unprecedented epidemic of foreclosures, and a growing feeling of being trapped as long-term renters.

The housing crisis is both cause and symptom of the nation's economic woes. It is a major source of unemployment—not only among construction workers but also in related industries. Most Americans are aware that a revitalization of housing and construction would be a major job-creating factor. But even a full-employment economy would not make housing affordable, even for all middle-class Americans. In order to bring that about, major changes are needed. The present housing crisis offers the nation an opportunity to rethink the way it provides (or fails to provide) shelter. We can continue to devise various tax and subsidy schemes to bribe banks and builders—or we can redefine housing as a basic right and find new ways to provide affordable homes.

The way America provides housing has become a waste of resources second only to that of the Pentagon. In 1981, sales of new and existing homes totaled $227.9 billion. To pay this bill, Americans went deeper and deeper into debt. Yet this vast expenditure resulted in the production of only 705,400 new homes, a postwar low. The largest part—81 percent—was used to trade existing homes for more suitable ones for their owners—at greatly inflated prices—a tremendous misallocation of resources.

If present trends continue, we will need 2 million new housing units per year over the next decade just to keep pace with population changes. But only about half that many will have been built this year. The generation of the postwar baby boom is now coming of age and looking for homes: some 42 million people will reach the age of 30 in the 1980s, 10 million more than in the previous decade. The ranks of homeseekers will be further swollen by growing numbers of single, divorced, and elderly households.

Having long regarded a home of their own as a birthright, many Americans now face the prospect of becoming lifelong renters. The proportion of homeowners rose from 44 percent of all U.S. households in 1940 to 62 percent in 1960, and it leveled off at around 64 percent in the next two decades. Last year, for the first time in over 40 years, the homeownership rate declined. The average home buyer requires an income of $39,196—almost twice the median national income. With the average price of a single-family home nearing $80,000 (compared with $23,400 in 1970), almost the only people who can afford to buy a house are those who already own one. A recent study by the U.S. League of Savings Associations notes that first-

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time homebuyers made up 36 percent of all purchases in 1977, but only 13.5 percent four years later. Couples are forced to take on several jobs to keep up payments—yet many are still unable to do so. According to the Mortgage Bankers Association of America, last year at least 5.5 percent of all mortgages were in arrears 30 days or more and 138,000 mortgages were in foreclosure—both postwar records.

The desperation Americans feel regarding their chance for homeownership is reflected in a contest recently held in Allentown, Pennsylvania, a declining industrial city. A local radio station promised an $18,000 mobile home to the person who could remain the longest atop a billboard. But after nine months (including the cold winter) the radio station called it off, awarding the prize twice—to two men who had lived alone, each in a tent. Food had been sent to them by family and friends. Both still had no intention of giving up. This was, they both said, the only way they could ever own their own homes. This is the situation for many Americans. And yet, despite the desperate shortage of affordable new housing, much of the country's existing rental housing is being senselessly depleted through undermaintenance, redlining, abandonment, condo conversions, and arson for profit—all based on "rational" economic incentives.

IN THE '60s, just 20 years ago, affording to buy a house was no problem—except, of course, for the poor. Today, 37.2 percent of American households—26.6 percent of homeowners and 52.9 percent of renters—pay more than one-quarter of their income for housing; 11.4 percent pay more than half. (These figures include long-term homeowners who had paid off their mortgages as well as recent buyers, who must pay a much steeper part of their income to purchase a home.) The poor, who are least able to cut corners on other items, suffer most from the housing crunch. Among those who make less than $10,000 a year, fully 73.6 percent spend more than one-quarter of their income just for shelter. Two decades after the War on Poverty, one-third (34.5 percent) of low-income Americans spend over half of their incomes just to put a roof over their heads. And this situation will worsen.

Since the late '40s, the housing industry, trade unions, poor people's advocates, and housing activists have joined in an uneasy alliance in support of a national housing policy based on subsidies and tax breaks for bankers and homebuilders. For several decades this policy seemed to work—at least for the increasing number of people who could afford to own their own homes. By the mid-1970s, however, economic growth stagnated, wages and salaries leveled off, and the postwar strategy began to falter.

Of course, this approach never worked for the poor. In the name of slum clearance and urban renewal, the government bulldozed more housing down than it built. For those most in need, it interceded with two half-hearted programs—public housing and rent subsidies.

Fearing competition from public housing (which it claimed was an opening wedge for socialism), the real estate industry sabotaged the public housing program from the beginning, pressuring Congress to limit it to the very poor. By constructing buildings that most charitably can be described as resembling warehouses, the industry insured that "government housing" would carry a stigma of poverty and mismanagement—thus discouraging middle-class people from demanding such housing for themselves. Today, only 1.2 million American households (1.9 percent) live in public housing—the lowest percentage of any industrialized nation.

Rent subsidies, which came in response to the '60s ghetto revolts, have never been sufficient to accommodate more than a small fraction of those who qualify. The current program, called Section 8, serves only an additional 1.3 million households.

These two government programs—subsidies and public housing—have been at best a small safety valve to relieve some of the pressure of a private housing market that cannot provide adequate housing for the poor. But now, despite growing waiting lists for both programs, the Reagan administration is instituting cutbacks that will dramatically reduce the programs' scope and effectiveness. Indeed, housing programs have borne the biggest brunt of Reagan's budget axe. The report of his Commission on Housing, dominated by builders and bankers, calls for "free and deregulated markets" in place of government intervention. It signals the abandonment of even this minimal public commitment to house the poor.

Yet the government's largest housing subsidy—benefiting the affluent rather than the poor—is in no danger of falling to the Reagan axe. This subsidy, allowing homeowners to deduct all property taxes and mortgage interest payments from federal income taxes, will cost the government $39 billion in lost revenues this year alone, which is more than two and one-half times the entire annual budget of the Department of Housing and Urban Development. These benefits are extremely regressive. About 30 percent of them go to taxpayers with incomes over $50,000, who make up less than 5 percent of the population. Most homeowners, how-

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ever, benefit only minimally from such deductions, and 60 percent do not claim them at all. Tenants get none; they are not eligible.

THERE IS A GREAT NEED for a renewed government commitment to housing—for a commitment to fulfill the long-ignored 1949 Housing Act that promises "a decent home and suitable living environment" for all Americans regardless of income. In order to carry out that goal today, we need a fresh approach, a new plan. It should embody four principles:

(1) It must state clearly once again that decent and affordable housing is a basic right of all Americans.

(2) We should extend to all who want it the security of tenure usually identified with homeownership—immunity from eviction or foreclosure, protection against unreasonable cost increases, and the sense of attachment to place embodied in the phrase, "one's home is one's castle."

(3) Capital should be used productively to build new housing and maintain the existing stock rather than to promote wasteful trading for speculative profit.

(4) Residents should have a major voice in decisions that affect the cost and quality of their homes.

Such goals and principles would commit the government to take bold steps to provide housing for all. We then also propose a three-part program that will complement the private housing industry. Many people will choose to rely on private homebuilders or landlords. But for the growing number of those who are ill-served in the marketplace, we offer an approach that attacks our wasteful housing system at its sources: high interest rates, inefficient tax policies, and speculation.

(1) The centerpiece of this approach is the replacement of the current mortgage system with a combination of selective credit controls and interest-rate subsidies. The federal government would regulate private mortgage lenders, requiring them to set lower interest rates for nonprofit, low- and moderate-income housing construction. To the extent that these lowered interest rates require additional subsidies to assure affordability, the government would make such subsidies available, giving preference to nonprofit cooperative or public housing.

(2) Tax policy should be used to steer investment productively, rather than encourage speculation. Wasteful tax shelters must be eliminated, particularly depreciation allowances for rental property. In addition, the regressive homeowner deduction, which mainly benefits the wealthy, should be replaced with a system of tax credits for renters and homeowners alike. These credits would provide adequate tax relief for the majority of homeowners, while eliminating the large deductions for the wealthy few.

(3) Finally, to end speculation and guarantee continued long-term affordability, this program would foster two nonmarket forms of housing ownership: limited-equity cooperatives and public-utility housing.

In limited equity co-ops, owner-residents hold a share of a nonprofit housing corporation, which repurchases their share at a fixed rate of interest when they leave. This keeps housing costs low for the co-op's present and future members. Residents would enjoy all the benefits of ownership, except the right to sell their homes for unrestricted profit, and they would be free from the threat of eviction and foreclosure. The no-resale limitation would eliminate the major cause of housing inflation—mortgage payments that are hiked upward each time a house or unit is sold.

Public utility housing would be owned by either a municipal housing corporation or by nonprofit community-based groups, such as churches and trade unions. In exchange for a government subsidy, these nonprofit landlords would be subject to strict controls regarding the sale of their units. To reduce construction costs, municipalities would set up "land banks" to acquire and hold land for future development, thus preventing it from falling into the hands of speculators.

Both cooperative and public utility housing can consist of apartmentlike structures as well as detached single-family homes. Whatever form they take, both will provide residents with the maximum opportunity to make decisions that affect their homes—decisions concerning maintenance, ongoing costs, and selection of fellow residents.

The current wave of foreclosures offers an immediate opportunity to provide emergency relief for many harried homeowners and, simultaneously, a nonmarket alternative to the present inefficient system. Across the country, angry homeowners are demanding that banks give them more time to make mortgage payments while they are unemployed. This approach, now being debated by dozens of state legislatures, would treat symptoms rather than causes.

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Instead, the federal government (perhaps through a newly created Housing Bank) should offer two- or three-year loans to the hundreds of thousands of low- and moderate-income homeowners in danger of being foreclosed. For this protection, recipients would agree that if the loan cannot be repaid in full, the property would be deeded to either a cooperative or a public-utility housing corporation. In exchange, the current owners would be guaranteed lifetime tenure. In this way, a stock of affordable housing would be secured, and hard-hit homeowners would be protected against involuntary displacement.

THIS PROGRAM is not utopian. All of its strategies have been successful in Europe and, in a more limited way, in the United States. With the middle class now facing the dismal reality of skyrocketing housing costs, the poor bearing the brunt of the housing crunch, and unprecedented unemployment within the housing industry sending ripples through the economy, the political basis for a new approach now exists. □

Nicolaus Mills

Architectural Politics: The Vietnam Memorial

"Their monument sticks like a fishbone in the city's throat." The monument Robert Lowell had in mind when he wrote those lines was Augustus St. Gauden's Civil War Memorial of Colonel Robert Shaw and his black troops, but in 1984 Lowell's lines are equally appropriate to the newly erected Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C. In a city dominated by white marble monuments built on a heroic scale, the Vietnam Memorial, with its black granite walls that never rise above ground level, defies expectation. It raises questions, as no public building of the last decade has, about the role of modern architecture in American life. And beyond that, it asks whether we, as a nation, are capable of honoring the men who died in Vietnam while refusing to honor the war they fought.

Monument controversies are nothing new in the capital. The Washington Monument, commissioned in 1783 by the Continental Congress, was not finished until 1884 because of arguments over its form, and the Franklin D. Roosevelt Memorial, which was approved in 1960, remains unbuilt today because of dissatisfaction with its design. But what distinguishes the debate over the Vietnam Veterans Memorial from these earlier controversies are the passions it has aroused. To its critics the new memorial is not merely bad architecture. It is a "black gash" of shame, "a tribute to Jane Fonda," as Tom Wolfe wrote in a *Washington Post* article attacking the memorial as an enormous pit.

The story of how the memorial became the focus of such controversy begins in 1979 with Jan Scruggs and the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund (VVMF). A veteran himself, Scruggs began the VVMF with the idea of erecting a monument to those who had died in Vietnam. The monument was, as a VVMF press release stated, to be funded by private rather than government sources and to make no political statement. In late 1979 legislation was introduced in Congress allocating land for the memorial, and in 1980 the project was signed into law by President Carter. At this point the VVMF moved on to its next task, choosing the design for the memorial.

To make sure the results would be of the highest quality, the VVMF opted for a juried competition open to all American citizens over the age of 18. The seed money for the contest was provided by Texas computer millionaire H. Ross Perot, and an eight-man jury, consisting of sculptors, architects, landscape architects, and a design critic, was instructed to insist on only two requirements in any design it chose. First, the names of the 57,939 Americans who had died or who were reported missing in Vietnam had to be contained within the memorial. Second, the memorial had to reflect the fact that its location in the Constitution Gardens would place it between the Washington Monument and the Lincoln Memorial.

The competition, which began in October 1980,

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received 1,421 entries. The biggest surprise, however, was not the high number of entries but the winning design: a minimalist sculpture-earthwork by Maya Ying Lin, a Yale undergraduate, who was a child when the Vietnam War began. In a recent interview she would recall, "I honestly don't have thoughts on the war," but "I remember my father never letting me out of the house during the [antidraft] riots, because I was in a university town."

The jurors' approval of Maya Lin's design was unanimous, but the austerity of her memorial and Maya Lin herself (a 21-year-old woman with Chinese-American parents, who had conceived of her winning design in a course on funerary art) guaranteed controversy. From this point on, the project, which needed approval from the National Capital Planning Commission, the Commission of Fine Arts, and the Department of the Interior, was in trouble. In October 1981 Tom Carhart, a member of the VVMF and a losing entrant in the memorial competition, appeared before the Commission of Fine Arts, charging Lin's design with being a "degrading ditch" designed to honor the war at home, and soon after his appearance, the anti-Lin arguments began to escalate. Ross Perot, after contributing $160,000 toward construction of the memorial, produced a poll of 587 ex-POWs in which a majority were said to oppose Lin's design, and on Capitol Hill, ex-POW Senator Jeremiah Denton (R.–Ala.) threw his weight behind the antimemorial forces.

By now it was clear that approval for the memorial was not going to come about without major compromise. In January 1982 the debate moved to Congress, where an ad hoc committee chaired by Senator John Warner (R.–Va.) was formed to work out a settlement. What followed was a deal intended to appease both sides. Maya Lin's memorial, scheduled for groundbreaking in March, was approved, but in turn her opponents were granted what they wanted: the right to have a flag pole and an alternative sculpture placed in the Constitutional Gardens. In April 1982 a panel consisting entirely of Vietnam veterans was chosen by the VVMF to select an artist to do the sculpture. In July they settled on Frederick Hart, a third-place winner in the original memorial competition. The maquette of Hart's statue, unveiled in September, showed it to be strikingly different in concept from Lin's memorial. Where Lin's memorial had been abstract, Hart's was strikingly realistic. Its subject was unmistakable: three soldiers, one black and two white, bound together in a mixture of camaraderie and exhaustion.

The result is a compromise both sides have qualms about, and in the last 18 months the debate over the two memorials has constantly sounded like a 1980s version of the 1960s arguments over the war itself. Unfortunately, each side has managed to distort the other's position and then had its charges further sensationalized by such newspaper reports as Tom Wolfe's "The Battle of the Vietnam Memorial." The truth of the matter is that, despite the symbolism they have acquired, the two memorials do not represent a struggle between elite and populist art, on the one hand, and antiwar and prowar sentiments on the other. They are much too complicated for such reductive labels.

IN THE CASE of Maya Lin's memorial the criticism is especially distorting. Her Vietnam Memorial carries with it none of the sardonic antiwar sentiment we find in such contemporary art as Ed Kienholz's "The Portable War Memorial" or Claes Oldenburg's polemical fantasy "Proposed Monument for the Intersection of Canal Street and Broadway." Maya Lin's walls are in the funerary tradition that explains Memorial Hall at Harvard, the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington, the Navy-Marine Memorial in Washington. Their central focus is the dead, not the aims of the war in which the dead lost their lives.

It is no accident that on Veterans Day in 1983, when the memorial was unveiled, there was such an outpouring of emotion from those who had come to Washington for the ceremony. The memorial, whose walls are angled so that they point to the Washington Monument and the Lincoln Memorial, is designed to involve the viewer with both the Vietnam dead and American history. It appears as a rift in the earth, a long v-shaped wall of polished black granite, emerging from and receding back into the earth. From a distance it is impossible to make out the names carved on each of the 250-foot

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walls. But the closer you get, the more distinct the names and mirrorlike the wall. You cannot in the end make out a name without also finding your own face—and usually the sky and clouds—reflected back. To get close to the memorial means, however, not merely viewing it from a distance of a few feet but descending down a walk, which leads to its apex ten feet below the surface of the ground behind it. There, on the right side of the apex, appear the names of the first men to die in the war, and then in chronological order as the wall recedes into the earth the names of more dead and missing. But to leave the memorial by following the names and moving away from its deepest point is not to abandon the dead. For the chronology of the dead and missing resumes on the left wall of the v, and in the end you are brought back to the deepest part of the monument, where the names of the dead and missing first appeared.

To be loyal to the architecture of the memorial is never to turn away from the dead it mourns. Instead, you find your reflection mingling with their names, and the names, despite their placement below the ground, always pointing to more dead. If friends or family want to find a particular soldier, they must go to one of the memorial's guides, who carries with him a huge alphabetized book that gives the location of each soldier's name. But even this cumbersome process is moving. The locator book is like a telephone directory for a city of the dead, and what it reminds us of by the very pause it gives is the collective toll of Vietnam.

Under these circumstances it is understandable why Maya Lin should feel badly treated and in a letter to the VVMF describe Hart's statue (which will be placed 120 feet from the entrance to the memorial) as an "intrusion." The rules of the competition she won have not been followed, and the changes that have come about since then have occurred because the opponents of Lin's design had more political muscle than the jury that approved it. The problem is that to write off Hart's statue as an intrusion or to see it, as *New York Times* architecture critic Paul Goldberger does, as "converting a superb design into something that speaks of heroism and of absolute moral certainty" is to overlook what Hart has done and the need his "vets" speak to. Hart's memorial is not a 1980s version of the Marine Corps Monument with its bronze soldiers triumphantly raising the American flag over Iwo Jima. In a war of unheroic iconography—the ditch at My Lai, the burning of the village of Cam Ne, the evacuation of Saigon—Hart's statue captures the one value that sustained soldiers throughout Vietnam: loyalty to each other. Despite their muscularity and combat gear, Hart's three soldiers are not glorified and certainly not triumphant. They appear weighted down by the guns and ammunition they carry, and what comes through, as Hart himself has pointed out, are their bonds of love "in the face of their aloneness and vulnerability."

What Maya Lin has done for the memory of those who were killed in Vietnam, Hart has attempted to do for those who survived the war. That in the end his effort has not been equal to her masterpiece is worth noting. But to dwell on the limits of his sculpture, let alone exaggerate them, is to repeat the worst mistakes the antiwar movement made between 1965 and 1975, when, despite the rightness of its position, it managed to isolate itself from the country as a whole. For if Lin's memorial asks whether we are prepared to honor those who died in Vietnam while refusing to honor the war they fought, Hart's statue raises a more immediate and human question: Are we prepared to honor those soldiers who survived Vietnam while refusing to honor the war they fought? ❐

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Storm Warnings for Mitterrand

1. Lewis Coser

France's Socialist government is in deep trouble. There has been no real amelioration of economic conditions during the current year; in fact, things seem to have deteriorated further. The rate of inflation will come to roughly 9 percent this year (as against a German rate of only 3 percent and a significant lowering of the British rate). The unemployment rate is about 8 percent and seems to be increasing. The mean number of months during which a person is unemployed in France is around 13, higher than almost anywhere in Europe.

Many of the nationalized industrial concerns have been accumulating huge new debts. In 1981 the combined losses of the newly nationalized industries amounted to around $900 million. Last year these losses rose to $1.4 billion, and they are expected to be still higher this year. Despite such losses, the government has continued to channel new funds into the nationalized sector. Officially it has asserted that it is mainly concerned with modernizing and rationalizing industries, such as electronics, which can compete in international markets. In practice, the government has all too often consented to backing losers in such industries as steel, because to do otherwise might incur the wrath of workers who would be laid off.

The government has now embarked on a strict austerity program. (Austerity is the order of the day almost everywhere in Europe, no matter what the politics of the government in power. There is austerity in Socialist Spain and Portugal, in middle-of-the-road Belgium and the Netherlands, in conservative England and Germany.) After the left-wing, class-struggle, protectionist wing of the Socialist party lost its governmental influence early last year, when its leader Jean-Pierre Chevènement was ousted as minister for industrial development and research, the government embarked on a course of lean policies that is likely to last several years.

The budget for 1984 spells out a dismal message for French taxpayers. There will be surcharges on the income tax, and not only forced loans as in the last budget, which will hit the upper strata but also the middle classes, the salaried employees, and lower management. Even the working class, which will not pay much higher taxes, will have to contribute through a 1 percent increase in old-age contributions. What is more, the budget is built on the hypothesis that the average wage increase in the coming year will only be 4.9 percent, while it was 9.6 percent last year and about 15 percent in both 1980 and 1981. (The government hopes that the inflation rate next year will be only 5 percent so that wage earners will not suffer real losses; but it seems more realistic to predict a considerably higher inflation rate and hence real losses in purchasing power among wage earners as well as salaried employees.)

The government justifies these austerity measures as necessary not only to overcome the present crisis but also to make France more competitive in the world market. It has still further increased its outlays for research, education, and modernization. Such outlays will not pay off in the immediate future. In the meantime, France's economic position in the world market and hence the position of the franc have not improved; huge debts have been accumulating; the various austerity measures at best will mean no improvement in living standards, and at worst a decided deterioration.

Not only the economy but also the state of public opinion has become worrisome for the government. Local elections since the Mitterrand regime came to power all indicate losses by the left and significant gains by the right. A poll organized by the left-wing *Nouvel Observateur* last June showed that 54 percent of the voters would now opt for the right—which would give the right a solid majority in parliament. This poll and several others show that the left would be far outdistanced by the right among such categories of voters as farmers, small businessmen, and handicraft workers, and in the upper-management and liberal professions.

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The left still has the lead among workers, among salaried employees, and in middle management. While older persons have swung to the right, the majority of the people under 34 years of age are still faithful to the left. All in all, however, opinion polls and local elections spell out a frightening message for the government and its Socialist supporters.

THE GOVERNMENT AND THE PARLIAMENT have now gone through about half of their five-year term. There will be new parliamentary elections in 1986. Elections for the presidency, however, will only come two years later. This seems to indicate that 1986 might become a difficult year in French politics.

The Gaullist constitution, which is now 25 years old, was built on the assumption that the political orientation of the president, the prime minister and his cabinet, and the National Assembly would be the same. This in fact has been the case under de Gaulle, Pompidou, and Giscard, and is so at present. In other words, the complicated constitutional checks and balances among the president, the Assembly, the prime minister and cabinet were never really tested. But what would happen if the right won a parliamentary majority in 1986 while Mitterrand would continue as president for an additional two years? This issue now has moved to the forefront of political debates.

Certain members of the right leadership have said that they would accept "cohabitation" of a left president and a right parliament and prime minister. Others, however, have said that an impasse could only be avoided through the resignation of the president and new elections, which would again lead to a political balance between the presidency and the Assembly. Mitterrand and the Socialists so far have made no official statements on the matter. This surely is a major issue: a parliament of the right might well decide to denationalize industries that have been nationalized in the previous period.

Would Mitterrand be expected to acquiesce and hence undo some of his cherished reforms? If not, what would he do? He could, of course, dissolve the Assembly and call for new elections, but it is not likely that an Assembly elected so shortly after the previous one would give different results. The stage might then be set for a stalemate with much of government business paralyzed if the president refuses to endorse measures taken by Assembly and prime minister, or vice versa. On the other hand, there is the possibility of compromise, and many political experts have been urging that this is the only course that might avoid a mutually destructive bout between the right and the left.

Be that as it may, the issue of the outcome of the 1986 elections is likely to dominate political discussions in the next two years. Political tensions have increased perceptibly in the last months. The deplorable economic situation has led to a polarization of the electorate, the right has become much more confident, and the left so far seems to bank mainly on an economic upswing, allowing a relaxation of austerity in the year before the elections. I, for one, surely hope so but am by no means convinced that this will be the case. French politics will be stormy in the years to come. □

2. Luther Carpenter

Two and a half years after its first bold initiatives, it is clear that the Mitterrand presidency has not taken France "beyond the welfare state." The 1984 budget, announced in September 1983, shows both the durability of the welfare state and its persistent problems.

Prime Minister Mauroy and Finance Minister Delors characterized the budget as "austere," but it is "austere" in a context light years away from American politics. The austerity came from increased taxes, *not* from reductions in any major social benefits. The government still plans to spend more on health and unemployment insurances and on pensions; austerity means no new social programs. Social expenditures have a momentum of their own, largely beyond the reach of any government. Conservative governments in France could not fiddle with eligibility for benefits as Reagan has done, because the bulk of these programs are not means-tested; Delors and Mauroy have accepted them as a basic commitment around which to plan.

Despite this commitment, President Mitterrand raised once again the question of whether there is an economic boundary to the welfare state. The total "fiscal pressure" (taxes plus social security

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contributions) passed 45 percent of GNP for the first time. There is a bit of unreality about this measure, because many of the benefits go right back to the working population, not to inactives, and also because social spending provides many jobs. Nonetheless, Mitterrand proclaimed the goal of reducing it to 42 percent by the 1986 legislative elections.

The best way to reduce fiscal pressure would be rapid economic growth. Growth of GNP would reduce the pressure caused by a constant volume of public expenditures, and it would reduce some social expenditures (such as unemployment insurance). With respect to growth, the Socialists have had a major disappointment: the industries they nationalized in 1981 have not led the economy into a new wave of growth. Investment in public industries fell last year at the same rate as that of private industry, despite the government's announced intention of getting public industries to invest in high technology. This does not mean that the strategy of using nationalizations to create investment-led growth (a kind of left supply-side economics, which the British left also shares) now has definitively failed; but there is a setback.

Without full employment, the welfare state works badly. As a result, the French government has turned back to courting business. The current budget tries to cajole business into investing more, by making a show of placing no more taxes on companies but, instead, raising employees' social security contributions. So far, there is no sign of appreciation from the employers' federation.

The group that has complained the most is middle and upper management. Their union reacted bitterly, calling for mass demonstrations to oust the Mauroy cabinet. It is true that they were hit hardest by the budget, since a surtax on the income tax fell mostly on them; nonetheless, they still are one of the most favored groups in the nation. Their reaction imperils one of the basic tendencies in the French welfare state for the last 15 years. One answer to the worker outburst of 1968 has been to let workers' incomes rise more rapidly than the incomes of the managers, so as to integrate workers into the system; now the managers are setting a sharp limit to the degree of equality they will accept. Their reaction could well intensify the fighting over other parts of the tangled boundaries between the masses and the elites.

Education is an especially tangled boundary, where Socialist desires to reduce the disparities between working-class and upper-middle-class children's opportunities have angered some liberal Catholics as well as conservative elites. Efforts to create equality through education alone often backfire, strengthening class-segregated institutions instead of creating more equality of opportunity. In Britain, for instance, the abolition of municipal grammar schools has given the old "public" schools a near monopoly on "quality" education, far beyond the reach of working-class children.

In education, over the last 30 years, there has been a quiet, deadly battle, in which efforts to increase opportunities for ordinary people are frustrated by the lack of opportunities farther along the line—a lengthening of the line you need to stand on in order to get credentials. The same thing has been true, to a lesser extent, of wages. Wages in France went up some 9.6 percent last year and 15 percent in each of the two previous years, but in a period of slow growth, inflation took most of the gains. According to Alain Vernholes in *Le Monde* (September 16, 1983), "German unions negotiate yearly salary increases of 4 percent to 5 percent . . . while, in France, escalator clauses assure an automatic gain of 10 percent. Three devaluations in two years have permitted French industry to offset the differences and continue to export." Instead of this race between wages and inflation, the French welfare state needs something like the social contract preached by the right wing of the British Labour party or the national wage bargaining practiced in Sweden.

IN THE ABSENCE of a social contract, slow growth, high taxation, and the silent jockeying to maintain entrenched social positions lead to a lot of frustration. One sign is the government's extremely low standing in opinion polls. A sign that such frustration could turn ugly was the mayoral election in Dreux in September. The candidate of the National Front, running on an anti-immigrant program in a town with a large number of immigrant workers, polled some 17 percent of the votes on the first round; even more ominously, he was invited into the opposition coalition for the second round. Socialists and Communists made antiracism and the defense of human rights their slogans, happy to be fighting the election on such favorable ground. These slogans made some more sensitive figures of the opposition dissociate themselves from the National Front, but this was not enough to bring victory—in a town where the incumbent mayor had been a Socialist.

The Dreux election shows how important it is to get growth and keep the welfare state functioning, and what a grave situation the Mitterrand government now is in. □

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Bob Kuttner

JOBS

This article is one in a group of six that will appear in a volume entitled ALTERNATIVES: PROPOSALS FROM THE DEMOCRATIC LEFT, *edited by Irving Howe. Copyright © 1984 by the Foundation for the Study of Independent Social Ideas, Inc., and to be published this spring by Pantheon Books, Inc., with whose kind permission it appears here.* ALTERNATIVES *is an effort to provide realistic short-range and intermediate analyses of and solutions to the socioeconomic problems facing this country. The contributors to the book are Michael Harrington, Barbara Ehrenreich and Frances Fox Piven, Robert Lekachman, Gordon Adams, and Irving Howe.* — EDS.

I

America's current job problem is, unfortunately, not the result of a cyclical downturn in the economy that will be remedied by the upswing of the business cycle. Unless radically new policies are developed, unemployment is likely to remain close to 9 percent for the next decade. Since the late 1960s, each recovery of the economy from recession has produced a higher unemployment rate than the previous one. There is substantial evidence of long-term structural changes in the American economy, which suggest that we can sustain a "recovery" of sorts with unemployment rates scarcely touched. At this writing, the Dow Jones is roaring along at close to 1,300 while unemployment persists at 9 percent.

Besides the obvious problem of not enough jobs, there is an equally distressing if more subtle problem of not enough *good* jobs. As the economy shifts from a production base to services, information, and high technology, more jobs are being created at the extremes of the labor force and fewer in the middle. A factory economy, particularly when factories are unionized, produces millions of relatively high-wage production jobs. A service economy needs engineers and executives at one extreme—and millions of secretaries, fast-food workers, sales clerks, waiters, computer operators, and janitors at the other. If public policy is floundering on the issue of high unemployment, it has barely even noticed the more difficult issue of job distribution and content. If the middle of the labor market is eroding, it becomes increasingly difficult to maintain the United States as a middle-class society.

Before turning to remedies, it is important to look at the structural changes in the economy, for the job shortage and the "good job" shortage are closely related, and both have multiple causes. The causes include demographic shifts, the pressures of foreign trade, technology, the decline of the public sector, and the effects of a worldwide labor surplus on domestic jobs and wages.

First, consider the demographics. During the 1970s, an unprecedented number of women and young people entered the labor force. The young people happened to be alumni of the baby-boom generation. The women were motivated partly by feminism and then, as real wages and living standards fell after 1973, many more by the need to maintain household purchasing power. As recently as 1960, only 30

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percent of married women with children worked. By 1980, it was 57 percent. Even among mothers with children under six years old, today nearly half hold jobs. Fully two-thirds of the growth in the labor force during the 1970s was accounted for by women workers.

Although the economy grew at a somewhat slower rate during the 1970s than during the 1960s, it generated an astonishing 21 million additional jobs—50 percent more new jobs than during the 1960s. Even this formidable accomplishment, however, was insufficient for the burgeoning labor force, which grew by over 24 million. Simple arithmetic dictated that 3 million more people had no jobs at all. Further, the mismatch between the swollen labor force and the number of jobs created a classic supply-and-demand problem: managers could now attract workers for lower wages. More workers were accommodated than ever before, but the price for this was a drop in real wages.

After 1973, this effect was compounded by the slowdown in real economic growth. As real wages dropped, for both men and women, more and more women poured into the labor force, putting more downward pressure on wages. This huge bulge in the labor force, of course, is a one-time phenomenon; the baby boom will not be repeated for a very long time; nor can female labor-force participation rates jump to near-male rates more than once. But it will be 30 years before these effects subside.

The Pressure of Foreign Trade

THE HIGH unemployment/low-wage syndrome has been compounded by the effects of international trade. As recently as 1960, this trade accounted for only about 5 percent of the Gross National Product. The United States, and Western Europe to a surprising degree, were able to build domestic economies based on high wages, because each was substantially insulated from pressures from low-wage areas of the globe. European exports were not yet a threat to America's high-wage labor market, because American technology still dominated most basic industries. American superior technology was not a significant threat to Europe's labor market, because the dollar was extremely overvalued in relation to European currencies. Partly because of the strong dollar, and partly as a deliberate policy in the spirit of the Marshall Plan, American manufacturers did not export substantial amounts of industrial product to Europe; rather, they exported capital. They built plants in Europe, which provided jobs for European workers and transferred technology to European industry.

As a consequence, there was a historical moment when nations on both sides of the Atlantic could enjoy high real growth, rising real wages, and a costly welfare state. The postwar society contract defied the Marxian picture of reserve armies of unemployed workers and falling real wages, mainly because each political economy existed in splendid isolation.

The world since the late 1960s is radically different. Until the last two decades, underdeveloped countries served mainly as sources of raw materials for the products of advanced industrial countries, and as markets for a portion of those products. Comparative advantage, in practice, worked very much for the industrial nations, because terms of trade were very favorable and because the industrial nations got to export the high-value-added products.

Since the late 1960s, however, Third World countries have increasingly acquired branch plants of Western multinational firms, and have begun developing their own export industries. Technology and capital have become mobile. Almost anything that can be produced in the United States can be produced on a high-technology island of the Third World, at wages that are absurdly low by American standards. The world's most modern steel mill is currently in Nigeria; it pays its workers about $200 a month. Korean shipbuilding workers are only half as productive as Swedish workers, but they work at one-eighth the wages.

This new reality puts a whole new cast on the Ricardian concept of comparative advantage. As originally propounded, the theory of comparative advantage was based on what economists call "factor endowments"—a country's natural advantages in arable land, raw materials, climate, or plentiful labor force. If Honduras has a climate suitable for growing bananas, and Canada has plentiful reserves of aluminum

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ore and cheap hydroelectric power, it would be patently absurd for Canada to attempt to grow bananas or for Hondurans to dig for bauxite. But comparative advantage today is increasingly based on whose work force will work for the lowest wages, or who is cleverest at appropriating the newest technology and at penetrating the other country's markets.

"Protection," which is increasingly difficult to define (industrial policy is a form of protectionism, isn't it?), is often condemned as an irrational form of beggar-thy-neighbor. But by passively submitting to a comparative advantage based on ever cheaper labor—all in the name of some idealized notion of free trade—we beggar ourselves.

The newly exporting Third World countries, by combining high technology with low labor costs, contribute in several respects to unemployment and falling real wages in the United States. First, they replace American jobs. Second, they put pressure on employed American workers to moderate their wage demands. Third World competition has given American industry a whole new rationale for resisting unionism and decent pay scales. There is now a cottage industry of business-school experts, advising that America's chief problem is that we've priced ourselves out of world markets. What this literature fails to make clear, however, is how low is down. Surely, we can't expect American workers to lower their wage levels all the way to standards of a dollar an hour and less, which prevail in much of the Third World.

As the Great Depression made clear, falling real wages create a classic Keynesian problem as well. They depress worker purchasing power and consequently depress aggregate demand. Thus the purported gains of free trade may be illusory. If shirts manufactured in Taiwan are cheaper than shirts produced in North Carolina, American consumers gain. But if the American textile worker displaced by the foreign-made shirt remains unemployed, or is employed at a lower-value-added occupation, then the economy as a whole may lose. Conventional economics does not factor into the same equation the efficiency gain of trade and the output loss of idle physical and human capital. Whether the gain outweighs the loss is settled empirically, not axiomatically as the free-trade purists would have it. It depends entirely on whether the idled factors of production are reemployed, and at what activities. If yesterday's steelworker is today's cashier at McDonald's, then the entire economy is producing less value-added per worker, and workers as a group have less disposable income.

In addition to the pressures of demographic shifts and foreign competition, unemployment persists because of revolutionary changes in technology. For the first time since the industrial revolution, we seem to be entering a period when technology could truly wipe out more jobs than it creates. More subtly, technology seems to be wiping out high-paid production jobs, and eroding the middle of the labor force, with severe consequences for America's future as a middle-class society.

The most difficult problem of all is the interaction of trade and technology, as they affect the labor market. America's problem, we are told, is a lack of competitiveness: our workers are overpaid and our technology is obsolete. For many business conservatives and "Atari Democrats" alike, the remedy is productivity. By making our production processes more efficient, we will restore American industry to a position of competitiveness, which in turn will restore economic growth and produce the jobs that the economy needs.

But the literal definition of higher productivity is more output for less labor input. By definition, increasing productivity means fewer jobs, unless the economy is growing very rapidly. Thus the productivity paradox: the more the American industry becomes productive in order to compete in world markets, the more Americans are thrown out of work. Economic planners in every country are urging policymakers to emulate Japan: reduce unemployment by targeting capital investment on export winners. As long as only Japan was pursuing this strategy, it had no trouble exporting its unemployment; Japan currently has a trade surplus in industrial products of over $100 billion! But every country cannot solve its unemployment problem by exporting it. There is room for only one or two Japans.

Finally, we have a version of the 1930s-style Keynesian problem of unemployment breeding

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more unemployment and putting downward pressure on wages, especially at the low end. When 11 million or 12 million people are out of work, they are a drag on aggregate demand as well as consumers of transfer payment dollars. They consume, but do not produce. The federal deficit we have today is not sufficient to stimulate the economy out of recession, because it is a deficit born of tight money, lost tax revenues, and stagnant national output—not a deficit associated with a program of economic stimulation. With 9 percent of the labor force out of work, real wages decline, especially at the low end of the work force, which can be more easily replaced with the unemployed. Unions have a more difficult time bargaining for wage increases at a time of high unemployment. There is new credence in the idea that "excessive" wages are themselves responsible for high unemployment, although the Great Depression and Keynes's work on aggregate demand should have laid that idea to rest. The minimum wage, a force for egalitarian pay structures, was once 54 percent of the average wage. It has now dropped to about 38 percent.

Polarization of Wages

THE EROSION of the middle of the labor market, while closely related to the problem of high structural unemployment, is a distinct cause for concern. Studies by U.S. Department of Labor economists suggest that wage inequality has been widening since at least the late 1950s. The most comprehensive of these studies, by Bureau of Labor Statistics economists Peter Henle and Paul Ryscavage, (published in the *Monthly Labor Review*, May 1980) contrasted the distribution of wages in 1958 with that in 1977. Henle and Ryscavage found that at the 20th percentile of earnings (the bottom fifth), male workers increased their earnings by 130.6 percent, in current dollars. But at the 80th percentile—the top fifth—earnings increased by 206.7 percent. Highly skilled and trained workers, and professionals and executives, simply had more bargaining power and more prospects of full-time work than their lower-skilled workmates at the bottom of the pay scale.

The polarization of wages is also compounded by shifts in the distribution of occupations. Several independent empirical studies by an ideologically diverse assortment of economists have calculated that the rapidly growing service occupations have polarized pay structures, which are growing steadily more unequal, while only the declining manufacturing sector offers a distribution of wages that is both relatively egalitarian and stable.

A book-length study, *Services: The New Economy* (1981), by four colleagues of the well-known manpower economist Eli Ginzberg, concluded that the service economy in general exhibits polarized wages, while the declining production and construction sectors offered relatively higher wages and a wage structure that was far less skewed to the extremes. Construction and production work accounted for one job in four in 1950; today it accounts for only one in eight, and that share is steadily dropping. Since 1979, the economy has lost 3 million manufacturing jobs, most of which are not expected to resume even with the end of the recession. Moreover, according to research by the economist Barry Bluestone, it is precisely the high-wage sector of the manufacturing economy that is shedding jobs most rapidly.

Other ongoing research by Labor Department economists is comparing prevailing wages in the most rapidly growing occupations with those of occupations in the most rapid decline. The research shows that the 20 fastest growing jobs pay annual wages that average fully *$5,000 less* than the 20 occupations in steepest decline.

Of course, there is nothing inherent about production work that requires high wages, just as there is nothing inherently low-wage about a service economy. Production work happens to pay well mainly because of the efforts of strong unions. But unions have had little success in organizing secretaries, bank clerks, or even computer assemblers. Moreover, the one sector of the service economy that does pay well—the government—is in decline as a direct employer for a whole other set of historical reasons.

It also happens that the one sector of the manufacturing economy that is growing, microelectronics, shares many of the characteristics of the service economy. Because of its own rapid pace of automation, microelectronics

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production is not expected to be a mass source of new jobs, good or bad. "High technology," broadly defined, is expected to generate only about 6 percent of the new jobs that the economy will create over the next decade. Moreover, the high-tech field is the quintessential "dual labor market." Its engineers and computer programmers typically have at least one college degree, and the prevailing wage is in excess of $30,000 a year. Computer assemblers earn about $6.00 an hour, far below the prevailing factory wage of over $9.00. Fewer than 1 percent of computer assemblers are currently unionized; with unemployment at 10 percent and the electronics industry offering a relatively good set of working conditions and fringe benefits, the microelectronics industry has no trouble recruiting workers, despite the relatively low wage structure.

The high-tech field is also a classic dual labor market in another sense; there is a near-total absence of career ladders to bridge the gap between the industry's low-skill and high-skill labor forces. There is a thin layer of skilled technicians in between, but it is surprisingly small. The American Electronics Association predicts that the demand for skilled technicians will grow by only about 15,000 a year. With close to a million high-wage auto and steel workers on layoff, those few jobs will not begin to fill the gap.

Despite the vogue for retraining programs, it makes no policy sense to concentrate on the skills of workers when the real problem is the shortage of good jobs. Laid-off auto and steel workers have been encouraged to enroll in retraining programs, only to find that either no jobs exist at the other end, or that the jobs that are available pay a fraction of their former wage. Every time openings are announced for jobs that pay more than $8 or $9 an hour, people begin camping on the sidewalks.

II

Given these long-term changes in the structure of the economy and the shape of the job market, conventional policy responses are quite inadequate. The mainstream program to solve unemployment is "economic growth." Growth is of course desirable, but if more and more output requires fewer and fewer human workers, and if a growing share of workers producing for American markets are located abroad, then growth by itself won't solve the problem. In theory, all the purchasing power generated by growth "has to go somewhere." But it can go—and is going—to provide jobs overseas, while the jobs that it provides at home are not the kind that a broad middle-class society needs.

The retraining approach is also sadly inadequate. Demand for millions of blue-collar workers with new skills to tend the machines of the high-tech economy simply does not exist. Increasingly, high-tech machines tend themselves.

For example, the new field of "Computer-Assisted Design/Computer-Assisted Manufacturing" or CAD/CAM will transform the function of draftspeople. With CAD/CAM, a draftsman turns out blueprints by computer. Several junior colleges have introduced CAD/CAM technician's curricula to retrain a generation of draftspeople.

This new career opportunity is likely to be short-lived. Just around the technological corner is something called CIM, which stands for Computer-*Integrated* Manufacturing. With CIM, the engineer who designs a part sits at the computer terminal himself; and instead of turning out computer-generated blueprints, CIM transforms his design directly into parts, and ultimately products. The "new" job of CAD/CAM technician goes the way of buggy-whip maker.

By the same token, the usual liberal proposal of massive public works or public employment also fails to solve the problem. For a variety of reasons, public-works jobs have been short-term and relatively low-paid. Because of the complex relationship between trade unions and the Democratic party, CETA-type programs have been designed not to compete with union labor, or even with nonunion full-time career workers. Public-works jobs of the usual variety are not likely to replace the disappearing middle of the American labor market, or to solve the long-term problem of technological unemployment.

Let me now turn to some of the real solutions to the structural jobs problem.

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A Coordinated Worldwide Economic Stimulus Program

THIS PROGRAM must be coupled with a managed trade regime. As the unhappy experience of the first two years of the Mitterrand government showed, Keynesian reflation in one country is just as difficult as "socialism in one country." Our economies today are simply too interdependent to pursue their macroeconomic policies in isolation. If one country reflates by itself, its imports rise, a balance-of-payments crisis occurs, and the attempt at reflation self-destructs.

But even a concerted recovery program does not solve the problem of imports from low-wage areas. To be sure, it is in everyone's interest to help the Third World develop; but there is more than one form of development. It is simply not realistic to expect that the welfare states of Europe and North America, whose social contracts are based on decent wages, will permit low-wage workers to impoverish their own populations through unlimited imports.

An alternative to a trade free-for-all, in which different nations play by different rules and everyone employs forms of disguised protectionism, is to admit the political nature of the issue and to make the question of where production is located a matter for political bargaining. This sounds like utter heresy, but there are already numerous practical examples.

A good illustration is the trade in textiles. Beginning in the early 1960s, textile imports from low-wage countries were threatening to wipe out the U.S. textile industry. After a series of de facto moves, the U.S. and Europe eventually negotiated a "Multifiber Arrangement"—a frank exception to the GATT free trade regime—which recognized that every industrial country wanted to retain a domestic textile industry. Under the multifiber agreement, imports of textiles from cheap-labor countries were permitted to grow, but at an annual rate of growth limited to 5 percent. It is worth remembering that textile production, even in the U.S., is one of the lowest-wage manufacturing industries, despite a unionization rate of about 20 percent.

Armed with this umbrella, the American textile industry began to improve its technological advantage. During the 1960s and 1970s, with substantial union cooperation, the domestic manufacturers invested massively in advanced spinning and weaving technology. By 1980, the American industry could boast the world's highest rate of textile productivity. Note that "protectionism"—far from leading to "subsidized stagnation"—encouraged the textile industry to modernize and stay competitive. And of course it retained jobs for more than a million U.S. workers.

Nor has the multifiber arrangement beggared the Third World. Textile exports have continued to grow and new countries, such as China, have become vigorous competitors. But as the Third World continues to develop, it is politically unrealistic to expect that it will develop primarily by dominating Western markets and displacing Western workers. As these newly industrializing nations become more productive, their principal customers increasingly will be their own domestic markets.

Once nations reach approximately the same general wage levels, free trade need not undermine Western living standards and Western social contracts. But as long as the comparative advantage of the newly industrializing countries is based on repression of free trade unions, authoritarian governments working with authoritarian employers, and rock-bottom industrial wages, we have every right to limit imports. Indeed, there is a case for compensating tariffs to be levied on goods from countries that prohibit collective bargaining.

A second illustration is the domestic content legislation sponsored by the United Auto Workers. The bill requires that a substantial proportion of the value-added of cars sold in the United States be built with American labor. This approach is far superior to import quotas (the Reagan ad hoc remedy), because it gives the American consumer unlimited access to superior foreign-designed technologies and products; it merely assures that American purchasing power will provide at least some American jobs.

Most studies suggest that the Japanese comparative advantage in automobiles is mainly the result of better management, more efficient use of technology, and superior design—

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not cheaper labor. Japanese wage rates are lower than American ones, but it takes fewer worker hours to build a Japanese car. Moreover, only about 24 percent of the cost of building a car is labor costs in any case. Studies have shown that Japanese cars built in America are built with every bit as much labor productivity as those produced in Japan. And whatever advantage does result from cheaper Japanese labor is almost canceled out by shipping costs.

So building Japanese-designed and -capitalized cars in the U.S. would not exact a hidden tax on American consumers. Quite the contrary; it would benefit the American economy by keeping several hundred thousand high-wage production jobs at home. The domestic content bill is the exact counterpart of the development strategy long used by Japan itself. Before the Japanese Ministry of International Trade and Industry let American semiconductor manufacturers sell their products in Japan, MITI extracted a series of coproduction agreements, which served to accelerate the development of Japan's domestic semiconductor industry. More recently, Japan informed Boeing that before Japan Air Lines would order the new generation of planes, Boeing would have to sign an agreement that 15 percent of the value-added would be produced in Japan. And the Japanese made sure that the 15 percent represented aeronautical technology that Japan wished to acquire.

Coproduction agreements of this nature, far from restricting world trade, simply change the ground rules. They promote technology transfer and, more important, assure that products sold in a particular country generate some jobs in that country. This has been the strategy of nations such as Brazil with respect to the auto industry for two decades. American and European auto-makers wishing to sell to the big Brazilian consumer market must build auto plants in Brazil. Most European countries rely on similar policies.

The multifiber arrangement, and its success in stimulating technological advances, suggests another counterintuitive conclusion about the relationship of technology to trade: ultimately, *automation* is the solution to a temporary comparative advantage based on cheap labor. If textile production is labor-intensive, and Haitian labor is paid at one-tenth the rate of American labor, the ball game is over unless we are prepared to dig a moat around the American domestic market. But what happens when textile production is heavily automated? Suddenly we can again compete with Haitian textiles on the basis of price and quality, because our capital is more efficient.

The problem again is the familiar productivity paradox: automation produces more output at less labor input and thus makes "everyone" better off—but in the meantime it throws people out of work. When a machine replaces a production worker, both the firm and consumers generally benefit; the loss falls mainly on the worker who loses his job. The "gain" to the firm may be invisible, depending on the competitiveness in the particular industry. Replacing labor with capital may not increase profits; it may simply permit the firm to hold its own against its competitors, for in a highly competitive industry profits are held down and efficiency gains passed along to consumers.

If productivity gains are good for the competitiveness of American industry and good for American consumers, but bad for American workers (who are the same people as consumers between 9 AM and 5 PM), then the 64-billion-dollar question is how to socialize productivity gains, so they truly benefit everyone.

As Wassily Leontief has pointed out, the failure to redistribute the gains of automation could condemn the society to a paradoxical condition of rising productivity and rising destitution. There has been little practical experimentation with redistribution of work and leisure, especially on this side of the Atlantic; indeed, this is not even a recognized policy issue in the United States.

In Europe, trade unionists have long argued that the solution to technological unemployment is a shorter work week, earlier retirement, longer vacation pay, and other devices to share available work. The French have applied the boldest version of this program, and it has been only a mixed success. Under the French program, an extra week of vacation is added, the work week is gradually being reduced from 40 to 35 hours, and firms are encouraged to enter into "solidarity contracts" with their workers

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and with the state, in which workers agree to take voluntary early retirement and the state bears a substantial share of the cost of supplementary pensions, so that their purchasing power falls only slightly.

This approach has succeeded in stabilizing the unemployment rate at 8–9 percent, but it has not reduced it much. What might an American version of this approach look like? Here's one variation:

Redistributing Productivity Gains

SOME 11 MILLION AMERICANS are out of work, but millions more are working longer hours than they really want to. Two obvious categories are people over 60 and parents of young children.

The original Social Security Act of 1935 was motivated partly by a desire to make life more comfortable for the elderly; but it was also stimulated by the need to get older people out of the labor force to open up jobs for younger ones. Suppose we adopt a supplemental early-retirement incentive program. Unlike Social Security, which is becoming a fiscal drag because it is a pay-as-you-go system, let's prepay our new early-retirement program, on the model of an Individual Retirement Account. Call it an ERA, for Early Retirement Account. Under this approach, workers would have a very small deduction taken from their paychecks, which would be matched by the employer and by the government on a one-third/one-third/one-third basis.

Eventually, the accumulated capital would be sufficient to permit the worker to drop to a three-day week at age sixty, at full pay. If the average worker earns $12,500 a year, two-fifths of that times five years is a comparatively small sum—only $25,000. The payroll deductions necessary to build up to that sum over a 30-year period, especially given the miracle of compound interest, would be quite trivial—less than $200 a year. This system would also help the national savings rate, a favorite cause of capital-conscious conservatives. But it would do so without further enriching the rich. By enticing millions of workers over 60 to take life a little easier (but to continue productive work), this would open up millions of jobs for younger workers.

As the parent of two school-age children, my other nominee for oppressed worker is the two-income family. In theory, feminism and the family with two working parents was supposed not just to give women a ticket of entry to the male rat race; it was supposed to allow men the luxury of some female values—nurturing, care-giving, etc. Remember? Things haven't quite worked out that way. Despite the entry of millions of women into the labor force, wage cuts have outpaced the additional income brought into the family by working women. Average household income has actually fallen by 11 percent since 1973. The average woman with a full-time job outside the home still spends 30 hours a week on housework, according to the Labor Department. And very, very few fathers have taken advantage of working spouses in order to spend more time at home. Neither the drop in family income nor the conventional structure of career ladders permits it.

A proposal: Every parent, male and female, living with a minor child, shall be entitled to five years of full-time pay for half-time work. The benefit would be capped at, say, 100 percent of the first $12,000 of income, and 70 percent of the next $12,000, so that millionaires could not drop to half-time work at government subsidy.

This would accomplish two things. It would be good social policy in its own right. Parents would be able to be less frantically job-obsessed during the years when their children need them most. In the case of two-parent households, there would be a total of ten years when at least one parent was in the home at least half-time. In the case of a one-parent family, this would provide a far superior alternative to welfare. Second, of course, this particular form of family allowance would serve to free millions of person-years of jobs for people who are now unemployed. It would be a way of sharing available work, in a manner that also serves the critical social goal of shoring up family life.

As the economy becomes more and more productive, and fewer and fewer workers are needed to produce society's material goods,

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other wrinkles could be added, like periodic paid sabbaticals for everyone in the work force. The frequency, duration, and timing of these could be adjusted periodically, to provide a fine-tuning device to maintain full employment.

There is one caveat to this approach. In macroeconomic terms, a transfer is a transfer is a transfer. Somewhere, the money must exist to finance these new income transfers; otherwise, we are simply reallocating an inadequate supply of real income; income will be more equitably shared, but we will lack the money to maintain full-time living standards for part-time work. To some extent, of course, this system packs a Keynesian punch. To the extent that it reallocates purchasing power and reduces involuntary unemployment, it stimulates aggregate demand, which in turn stimulates the growth necessary to provide the real resources to finance the program. While it is unlikely that we will experience enough productivity growth to rely solely on work-sharing to solve the unemployment problem, it is nevertheless an indispensable piece of an overall program.

Procurement as Industrial Policy

EVEN MORE FUNDAMENTAL than work-sharing is the need to maximize total output as fewer and fewer workers are needed for production of physical goods. Obviously, a full-employment commitment is the beginning and end of any progressive economic program. Without full employment, workers who do have jobs lose their bargaining power to demand fair wages, and the state incurs the cost of supporting all those who have lost jobs.

Neither make-work nor share-work, by themselves, get the society to full employment with maximized output. We also need to devise a means to redistribute some of the increased purchasing power that results from productivity gains—and turn it into both good jobs and the production of socially desired goods and services. In other words, the state has to devise a way to create the effective demand for commodities and services that have "use-values," but for which the private market does not generate effective purchasing power.

There is a well-proven and quintessentially American device for accomplishing this redistribution and translation of purchasing power into jobs. It is, unfortunately, the Pentagon. To a lesser degree, it is also NASA.

Consider the World War II experience. During World War II, the U.S. government mobilized more purchasing power than the country had ever seen. During the first six months of 1942, the War Department entered more orders than the entire value of the Gross National Product of 1940! By 1944, the peak year of war production, the Keynesian prod of war production had so stimulated the economy as a whole that *civilian* output alone exceeded the economy's entire output of 1940. And we accomplished that, even though half of what we produced was made in order to be blown up. During the war, GNP expanded at an unheard-of rate of 13 percent per year. Today, we are congratulating ourselves that the 1983 "recovery" temporarily attained a growth rate of 5 percent, and economists debate whether such a rate can be sustained.

For 30 years, it has been fashionable in conservative circles to aver that "It wasn't the New Deal that cured the Great Depression; it was the war." True enough. But anybody who thinks that, economically, World War II was anything other than a massive dose of Keynesian demand stimulus is kidding himself and the public.

The supply-side nostrums—subsidizing the cost of capital and lowering the taxes to be paid on anticipated profits—may stimulate some new productive investment (*if* the entrepreneur is reasonably sure of a market for the product). But a government contract—a guarantee to purchase what is produced—is what really works miracles. In the year 1943, U.S. war production plants produced 128,000 airplanes. If American industry can actually design and produce *guided missiles on railroad tracks* for the sole reason that the U.S. government is willing to write a check to pay for them, it is safe to assume that American industry can produce almost anything.

World War II was also a formidable human-capital policy. People with no prior experience in factories came off the farms to take good jobs in war plants. Women, no less, learned

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blue-collar production jobs. During the war we trained 300,000 skilled machinists, a training feat that has never been equalled. The United States is now facing a shortage of experienced "A" machinists, in large part because about two-thirds of the senior machinists all reached retirement age about the same time—40 years after World War II!

War production produces a Keynesian "big bang" in several complementary respects. It puts the unemployed back to work, and at relatively high-paid jobs. Whether production is accomplished in the public sector or through contracts with privately owned industry is optional; it accomplishes the same Keynesian jolt to aggregate purchasing power. During World War II, a good deal of the research and development was public (or under contract to universities); much of the production was private. But there was a substantial degree of planning and coordination by the government. Not only does a World War II-style jump in public procurement put people back to work, train them at high skills, and boost purchasing power generally. It also sets in motion a technological dynamism. We are still living off many of the technological advances seeded by World War II defense contracting—synthetic rubber, the transistor, early computer science, America's early lead in civil aviation, and, of course (for better or worse), atomic energy.

Moreover, procurement contracts do not just allow industry to make profits and hire workers by meeting current orders; they also subsidize the rebuilding and improvement of capital equipment. The civil aircraft and the automobile and the chemical fertilizer industry that roared into full production to meet the postwar demands of returning veterans and their families were not produced by plants and machines that had to be built from scratch. They were built in converted war-production plants. Tank lines became car lines; ordnance production became chemical fertilizer production.

The World War II example immediately throws into relief the fallacy of the conservative claim that government allocation of capital must necessarily retard output because it deploys capital "less optimally" than the market. When output expands at 13 percent a year, the economy can afford a lot of suboptimal use of capital! Conversely, when 11 million people are out of work and industry is producing at below 70 percent of capacity, the genius of the market for allocating capital isn't worth very much.

It is axiomatic that government procurement wastes some money. But idle resources waste more money. Keynes himself, in a celebrated passage, observed that if the government buried old banknotes in bottles and paid jobless workers to dig them up, it would be preferable to keeping them idle. In a sense, paying workers to build the implements of war is tantamount to paying them to dig up old bottles. Neither process produces useful goods for the domestic civilian economy. Defense production, however, has a patriotic aura about it, which imparts to it all sorts of virtues that enable conservatives to overlook the intimate involvement of the government.

The challenge, therefore, is to find civilian counterparts to World War II. NASA is much like the Pentagon as an instrument of production, in that the output it stimulates is almost entirely removed from the civilian consumer economy. Some technical innovations of value to the civilian economy have resulted from NASA projects, but they were all incidental.

The closest thing to a "civilian Pentagon" proposal in the political mainstream is Senator Kennedy's call for a domestic technology agency, which would let contracts to private industry. Unlike Pentagon contracts, the purpose of these projects would be to stimulate the development of technologies and products with civilian applications.

One could go a big step further and create an agency that would enter into contracts whose purpose was not just the development of technology, but the creation of useful goods and services and the redevelopment of regional economies suffering high unemployment.

If America could grow at a rate of 13 percent a year on war production (much of which was blown up), just imagine how fast we could grow if that output went for useful goods and services. Suppose the government offered to buy a microcomputer for every classroom in America, subject only to the proviso that all of the production be carried out domestically. Suppose the government guaranteed a public

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schoolteacher-pupil ratio of 1:15. Suppose the government offered to replace every subway car older than ten years. Suppose the government offered to finance the development of a commercially viable system of decentralized photoelectric domestic power generation.

Make up your own wish list of socially useful products that provide jobs. If employing people to build bombs and guns and planes to blow up half of Europe could energize a rapid economic recovery, production of *anything* can energize a recovery.

A civilian equivalent of World War II has the added advantage of being far less inflationary than a war. In a war, much of the added production goes up in smoke. In the civilian equivalent of a war, government contract translates into useful products, so there is less of a problem of too much demand chasing too little supply.

Government procurement is also an excellent planning tool. The procurement can be targeted in areas of high unemployment, or to particular industries, or to create new forms of ownership.

Unfortunately, "industrial policy" has been defined largely as the subsidy or provision of *capital*, not the subsidy of production. For most of its advocates, industrial policy turns out to mean, in practice, some form of development bank or equity capital agency. That is far too limiting, and also too accepting of "supply-side" assumptions. Subsidizing capital accomplishes little when there is no assurance of a market for the product. Government procurement, in contrast, *creates* the market. It tells the contractor exactly what to produce, but leaves it to the contractor's ingenuity to figure out *how* to produce it. Anybody who thinks this inevitably leads to lemon products has never flown in an F–15. Government contracting has created technological marvels. Unfortunately, most have been in the military sector, which is almost totally isolated from the discipline of consumer markets. But it is also possible creatively to deploy government contracts to energize new, dynamic civilian sectors, and not just by buying new generations of products. The Japanese, shrewdly, create markets for new generations of capital goods, by offering to buy out old capital goods.

All of this, to be sure, will require the expenditure of tax dollars, and in the short run will increase public deficits. But the surest way—and in the long run the only way—to bring deficits back to moderate proportions is to get the economy back to full employment. Deficits that reflect high unemployment and shrunken tax bases create a self-perpetuating recession that will never cure either itself or the deficit it perpetuates.

Active Labor Market Policies

RETRAINING, BY ITSELF, is no remedy for 10 percent unemployment. But coupled with a commitment to full employment as a fundamental policy goal, active labor-market policies are very useful. The Swedes have devised a system of local labor-market boards, which report to a national labor-market board (the AMS). Under this system, workers are encouraged to take advantage of retraining opportunities, not just to upgrade the quality of the work force as a whole, to ease inflationary shortages of skilled workers, and to match manpower supply to manpower demand, but to take up slack during periods of high unemployment. At peak periods of joblessness, as much as 5 percent of the entire Swedish labor force is in some training or make-work program under the sponsorship of a labor-market board. Translated to American proportions, this would equal over 4 million jobs.

If we are serious about an industrial policy and a commitment to full employment, an entirely different approach to retraining is required. One promising variation is the use of retraining vouchers and wage-subsidy vouchers. Under this approach, any worker idled because of technological advances would be given a voucher that was worth, say, half of five years' pay to that worker's next employer. By subsidizing wages directly (rather than through tax gimmickry), this approach would send the dislocated worker to the head of the job line. It would also give a needed competitive advantage to cities and towns hard hit by plant relocations. In a Youngstown or a Flint, a prospective new employer would find thousands of skilled workers all holding job vouch-

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ers that would add up to a subsidy of half of the employer's labor costs for five years.

At present, American labor-market policy consists mainly of paying unemployment compensation to the unemployed, on the assumption that their joblessness is temporary. We also have a parallel system of paying means-tested (welfare) subsistence benefits to the jobless who do not have a history of gainful employment or an ability to take full-time work. All of this income transfer represents a resource that would be used for retraining and for wage subsidies, rather than just for subsistence.

Don't Mourn, Organize. The single most important piece of public-policy underpinning to the postwar, high-wage social contract was not job retraining through CETA or even minimum-wage legislation. It was the Wagner Act.

As the American work force is radically transformed in response to changes in the mobility of capital and the technology of industry, a strong labor movement is crucial to defend decent wages, to broker these transformations so that they are not paid for only by workers, and to provide a long-term constituency for progressive policies generally. The present labor movement surely has its warts, but a look at the sweep of progressive legislation over the past 40 years suggests that the labor movement is, if not the only game in town, the indispensable ally for the other players—the civil rights, environmental, consumerist, feminist, and other progressive movements.

During the past ten years the postwar consensus, in which big corporations grudgingly tolerated labor organization, has been unilaterally abrogated by management. It is now open season on labor unions. The nearly 50-year-old structure of labor law is in desperate need of overhaul. Government should once again be the ally of labor-organizing that it was during the New Deal, and labor unions themselves should be encouraged to take on the new issues of work quality, work organization, the influence of technology on work, as well as that most "un-American" labor issue of all: how capital is to be invested, and for what. □

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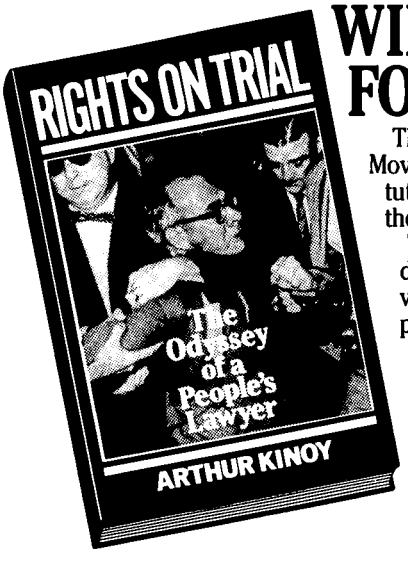

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Stanisław Barańczak

The Restoration of Order

Stanisław Barańczak, poet and essayist, was born in 1946 in Poznan, Poland. He studied at Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznan and received a doctorate in Polish literature in 1973. He was one of the cofounders of KOR in 1976 and a coeditor of Zapis *and* Krytyka, *two of the most influential independent publications. In 1977 he was fired from his teaching position at the university in Poznan and was without work for three years until pressure from the Solidarity movement caused his reinstatement in 1980. His poetry, including* I Know This Is Not Right *(1977) and* A Triptych of Cement, Weariness, and Snow *(1981), blends social concerns with linguistic experiment. Translations of his poetry can be found in Czesław Miłosz's* Post-War Polish Poetry *and his essays have appeared in the* New Republic, Encounter, *and* Tri-Quarterly. *He is now teaching Polish language and literature at Harvard. Something of a nonperson and unpoet in present-day Poland, his translations from English do, however, continue to appear; he retains a Polish passport, his future linked with Poland's.* — RICHARD LOURIE

1

According to unconfirmed reports. Which should be treated
with caution. According to unconfirmed reports
delayed in reaching us due to
unfavorable snowy weather and barbed wire. According
to unconfirmed reports, things had gotten out of hand,
air was being sucked into lungs too greedily, the sense
of reality had been lost—kicks in the ass were being refused—
the dialogue between brass knuckles and jaws had been
disrupted, the fault of the latter. According
to unconfirmed reports, there's little cause for surprise.
Little cause to be surprised by the decisive reaction.
A reaction caused by the will to restore order
so that everyone knows his place.

2

Coordination and precision, that's what counts, see.
It's December, the days are short, it'll be dark
and icy, they'll be cold, they won't last long
without heat or food in the what do you call them there, shipyards,

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plus with the water cannons, it'll be a snap, you know,
and when they're in tents out in the open, they'll start fading
fast, one after the other, you got to coordinate
these things with precision, you know, December
only comes once a year

3

After all, we spent so many nights listening to reports
of troop movements, unsure
of their actual intentions, where the peristaltic movement
of the treads was heading, to what degree
of longitude they could advance;

it was perfectly clear that those troop movements
are against the movement and for movement organized
out in the open air, against the disorders
and for the order that activates new blast furnaces,
against the resistance movement, for a move backward,
but to clarify the situation they will shoot
at anything that moves, guns lowered to eye level,
(just try it, brother, just move your head),
these forceps keeping the country's head from moving;

it seemed impossible to us,
it seemed
that despite themselves those forceps were actually assisting
in a birth

4

L., I know you won't receive this letter
but I'm sending it anyway. I really don't know what to say.
The whole thing seems too much like one
of your absurd jokes. It's those same guys—
remember how we laughed looking down at them on duty
in their car beneath our window, frustrated cops,
while we, free men, listened to a record of Schubert's *Winterreise*
and drank Bulgarian wine. Now they're top dog.
I'm sure you won't take all of this too seriously,
their crummy victory, their satisfaction
that now at last they can bash faces with impunity.
Remember—detained for wearing a black arm band
you silenced them with a curt "of course"
when chortling they asked you if you really believed
God exists. Sometimes our laughter disarms them, sometimes our gravity.
Plenty to choose from. At bottom one is always free.
I know you know that, even now, especially now.

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5

Eagle, this is Falcon, what's up on your end, over.
Things are getting hot here too, don't lose your head,
where can I get some people, I need some too, over.
They're walking around and shouting, the usual, over.
Shouting freedom justice different stuff, over.
You got tear gas, over. What are you waiting for, Eagle,
give them a taste of it then bust their heads, over.
Yeah right, so they won't ever want to try it again.

6

At least let them see us as we die!
Słowacki

According to unconfirmed reports, somewhere some hope
is expiring its lung pierced by a bullet, a meaning
clubbed to death, better this not be seen
by the satellite eye that watches over the world,
better that those celestial cameras that can catch
the glow of a cigarette not see
the torches of the living, better that a pillow of cloud
be pressed airtight to the lips justifying
our inability to serve as eye witnesses
to this offensive, demanding, run-of-the-mill death

7

After all, there were so many secret files
discovered years later in some forgotten safe,
there have been so many people who years later
finally found the courage to tell how their fingernails
had been torn out, there have been so many lists
with little crosses by the names and so many graves
where those people were buried by night in plastic bags
brought to light years later;

and so it had begun to seem impossible
that anyone still counted on covering his tracks,
still counted on the stone thrown into the water
vanishing entirely with no bottom to stop its fall

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8

Where did you get that leaflet, sir, what is your reason
for being out on the streets at this hour,
what gives you the right to wear that black arm band, quiet,
we're asking the questions and being polite about it too
as you can see and we expect that politeness back, sir, who
gave you the right to these rights,
whom does your Poland belong to, where
is the Mother of God hiding, contacts, names,
addresses, quiet, we're out here working
late at night and listen to you is that how they taught you
to talk polite at the university
on the state's money, who taught you
those expressions, who instigated
that expression on your face, quiet,
we inflict suffering, you must realize
what the times are like
and where you are living, dates,
names, facts, just you be civil

9

W., I'm sending you some brushes through a friend
though they'll probably never reach you. I heard
you're trying to paint in prison and that
you're looking bad after your hunger strike.
But I know you still look the same, still jaunty,
the moustache à la Jack Nicholson in *The Last Detail*,
the same pronouncements: "If a man over thirty
wakes up without something aching, he isn't alive."
It's true that we tried to prove to them
that we aren't children but grownup people,
men over thirty, no matter what. The funny thing
is that they, our high school classmates,
smarter about what they did after graduation,
had the same thing we did in mind. Except
they went to see different movies. For them
being a man meant wearing a shoulder holster,
driving fast cars screeching around corners,
and shooting like a pro from a half squat, using both hands.
For us being grownup was more like Bogart's grimace,
a bitter irony that had to be swallowed
because you don't spit such things out with people around.
Your painting of Prince Jozef Poniatowski,
his muttonchops flaring as he galloped to the Elstera
while his horse commented: "I knew it would end like this."
Take care, W., let's see another painting like that.

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10

According to unconfirmed reports that figure
behind the plexiglass shield may at heart
be well-intentioned, the voice barking the command
"Fire!" may have something else entirely
in mind, that tank crashing down the gate
may be opening up some new perspectives,
the club coming down on the man on the ground
may be a barrier protecting him from something far worse,
let's not jump to conclusions, let us be
objective, everyone deserves a chance

11

I hereby declare my loyalty and my willingness
to return home, I am committed to obeying
lawful authority and to warning everyone I know
of what has happened to me, details of which
I am not to provide, my signature
written in my own hand attests to the truthfulness
of the above, any suggestion of coercion is fictitious
as I will testify in the immediate future
in an unrehearsed television interview

12

After all, we knew so many of them, their lips pressed tight,
holding themselves stiffly, the face of a sullen infant
above a grownup's tie, forever deprived of the ability
to laugh at themselves, solemnly taking the lash from the wall
to punish their children, signing other people's decisions
with a fancy flourish, slamming the family table
or office desk with a ruler (that's how it is, you hear me):

it's impossible to think that it was all
so lethally infantile, all that smallness
on so grand a scale, that aging children
had taken on the task of setting things
like life and hope in order, serious things no matter what,
and which, despite everything,
are better left to us, the grownups

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13

A., there's no chance of this letter reaching you, I don't even know
if there's any sense in writing it. I'm reading your articles
smuggled out of Bialoleka. Your high-pitched triumphant stammering,
the lock of hair wound around a finger, the cellophane
from a pack of cigarettes balled and flattened in your hand
as you hold forth. I can see it and I cannot,
I can hear you and I cannot hear you through the walls,
the Atlantic's roar, the racket of treads, you in the intervals
between one beating or arrest and the next saying
your favorite wise-ass lines—"bullshit on toast" and
"nothing to flip about" followed hard by life-and-death concerns,
always in that same stammering falsetto. Maybe that's why I remember
everything so well, because of that urgent stammering rhythm.
You're right, A. Nothing to flip about. The only thing
one has to remember are a couple of simple lines,
really questions, so short they can be smuggled out
on a scrap of cellophane balled and flattened by a hand.

14

We are asking you to disperse or we will employ force,
I'm warning you, we're not using blanks, bullets aren't blind,
they know the way to the heart, they can hit
you where you live, so please

give it some thought, or we'll use force,
I'm warning you, our nightsticks are
long enough to beat sense into any head
that's raised or asking for it, so please

abandon hope or we'll use gas
I should point out this is tear gas
someone will weep bitterly here, I want this square,
this brain, this country cleared of hope so it will be
pure as a tear

15

According to unconfirmed reports, only seven
people have been killed, what does that count for,
seven people, the entire operation
cost surprisingly little, its efficiency
and speed were truly impressive,
and even if there were seventeen
or seventy corpses, widows, pools of blood,
what does that count for in the end.

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16

R., I received your letter (opened and stamped "Censored"),
I recognized that calligraphy of yours at once.
So you're still free, well, you always were.
And always would be. Even if there were no paper in the cell
you could have always memorized your poems,
two, three, six lines, every word essential.
That hyper-accuracy of yours. Weakness is your forte
but here you'd butt in to say "You're being paradoxical."
But there's something to it, nothing is stronger
than those fragile ivory miniatures, those spare hieroglyphs,
on the thinnest of paper. The black ink of those letters
will always seep past the censor's stamp.
And then what seems a bundle of raw nerves
straightens out into a line, elegant, exact, victorious.

17

With so much barbed wire, so many seas in between,
this cannister of gas that had not been shot
at me at all has, despite everything,
landed at my feet;

there's no chance of this doing any good,
it's pointless, their masks are airtight,
and it'll make my eyes sting even longer

but still I pick it up and throw it back at them.

Cambridge, Mass., 12/81 – 7/82 S.B.

Translated from the Polish by Richard Lourie □

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Kazimierz Brandys

From a Warsaw Diary: 1978–1981

Kazimierz Brandys is a distinguished, veteran Polish writer who, for several years before the rise of Solidarity, had been prohibited from publishing in his country by the Polish government. From 1978 onward, he kept a diary of events in Warsaw, which is being published this winter in an English translation by Richard Lourie. *We wish to thank Random House, Inc., the publisher of* A Warsaw Diary, 1978–1981, *copyright © 1983 by Kazimierz Brandys, for permission to excerpt the following portions.* — Eds.

July 1981

A certain revelation of which I had no inkling has forced me to do some thinking. Over the years I had reconciled myself to the thought that the concept of a struggle for justice or freedom was beyond the mass of society today and only put people on the defensive. That was, supposedly, the way things were. And indeed they were; but, at the same time, things were different. In one summer month an irresistible desire for freedom burst forth from the mass of humanity here, and suddenly it turned out that every other person was ready to fight for justice. Not all that long ago they had been silent; who does not recall the forest of hands rising in exemplary, unanimous elections. Three years ago, people smiled as they explained to me that of the 100 signatures on the protest concerning the Constitution, 90 would have dropped off had the government taken more repressive measures.

"None of this is serious." And perhaps not all of it was. Now, however, it becomes clear that in one respect it was serious, more serious than we had thought. We did not know, and we still do not know, to what degree human nature can hide from itself, how much it can deny itself. Perhaps any society, if skillfully trained with a stick, or a stick and a carrot, will renounce every truth. But a trace will remain in the depths of collective memory, a faint reflection of the ideal. I think that of all the things that have happened and come to pass, this is the most important.

The 15th day back. Today I refused to watch the evening news, and I haven't looked at a newspaper since yesterday.

The party commission, convened to examine the corrupt practices of the now-discredited party and government leaders, is now at work. The People's State Council has received motions that the members of the former ruling group be stripped of the state honors they had been awarded. At this moment, a person with the gift of making logical associations has to think, Will the medals be stripped only from those who were pinning them on themselves or also from those other people who received them from their hands? What will happen to the Virtuti Militari awarded to the leader of the U.S.S.R.? Will the State Council request that it be sent back?

I ought to be curious about further develop-

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ments. I'm not, however, and what I see and hear makes me sick. Duplicity is sprouting up everywhere again; such ambiguity and impurity hang in the air, such hypocrisy, that it makes you want to flee and hide in some forgotten corner of the world. Yesterday I read the lead article in a paper that has the reputation of speaking for the liberal center, an article written by an advocate of reform. The author commends the cause of renewal but immediately warns of the danger involved: a democracy that is extended too far threatens to weaken the state. This I read in a country where the idea of general democratic elections is sheer fantasy and where any schoolchild knows what in fact threatens to weaken this state. Everything has been painted with protective colors, concealed in civic-sounding phrases, but in every sentence you can feel the arms and legs trembling. The same faces on television, the names in the newspapers unchanged. Concocted reviews of the foreign press, moronic reportage on the domestic scene, and the more astute columnists already sniffing out the new currents. Oh, those columnists who write for the weeklies . . .

One of them, a gray-haired young man who two years ago performed monologues on television with a parrot on his shoulder, is today writing about the "need for disinterested beauty" and says that we are being oppressed by stupidity: "Both anti-Semitic and philo-Semitic stupidity, stupidity about renewal and hard-line stupidity, stupidity about egalitarianism and about voluntarism." He further states that everything depends on the sort of art we have, the way our artists behave, and, says the writer, they behave abominably: "The majority of them have made it a point of honor to run panting after every little incident, to multiply its echoes, to copy everything they read in the papers or hear at meetings or in lines for cigarettes." In a word, says the columnist and teacher of the nation, disinterested beauty, art, which should outlast the theater of life and not stand in a servile relation to it, is on the verge of being reduced once again to socialist realism. That's the real danger. The rest is just oppressive stupidity from which one should keep one's distance—anti-Semitic or philo-Semitic stupidity, that's not the point.

I don't know if there are any philo-Semites in Poland today, and if there are, what they are doing. I do, however, know that over a period of a few months the country has been flooded with publications and clubs whose slogans are straight out of the *Stürmer*. In printings numbering tens of thousands, on paper, which is in short supply, they castigate the Jews, who are in even shorter supply. And thus the state grows stronger.

Thirty-five years ago, a pogrom, instigated by the police, erupted in Kielce. That same hand prepared the murders of several dozen Jews in 1946, and five years later the execution of a group of Polish army officers, falsely accused of conspiracy against the party. The corpses in Kielce were Jewish. Again the journalists in Paris had something to write about: *un pogrom polonais*. In September of that year I traveled to France on a train packed with Jewish families fleeing Poland. An emigration center had been established in Paris, and Polish could be heard among those waiting there. Six weeks later we returned to Warsaw in an empty train, and M. asked me whether I was sure we were headed in the right direction. At the time I shrugged my shoulders; today I would be able to answer that question—for me Poland is a necessity and that is why I return. Fine. But today, after my latest return home, I find my name in an anonymously published pamphlet that lists me as one of the members of a secret Zionist group whose aim is the destruction of the Polish nation. It's all too easy to guess who put this crap together and who picked up the tab for it. I only wonder if it's going to be like this for the rest of my life.

That's only one side of things, of course. There are others that keep you going. The realization that 10 million people have succeeded in organizing themselves, have their own publications, are operating at the workplace and in the schools, that corruption and lies can be brought to light and people cannot be trampled upon—that realization improves one's frame of mind. I am still unable to distinguish between the groupings and factions within the movement. I am not well informed about them now and I will not attempt to become better informed. The religious ceremonies, the Catholicism of the movement, the

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proclivity for church services and processions—I cannot feel very close to all that, but it's understandable. People had been given nothing for their spirit. The church, in its wisdom, was able to draw the right conclusions; it offered people what they had been deprived of. Where there is no hope for society, the church becomes an earthly force, a social body. It could not have been otherwise.

Thus far there is considerable satisfaction about the political and organizational accomplishments, and satisfaction about the strengthened condition of the nation as a whole, a nation that did not submit. That is a matter of psychology. In time, however, collective psychology is transformed into a real value and enters the equation of history on a par with reforms and rights wrested by force. And it is worth the effort regardless of any further developments. And regardless of what seems bad or laughable or brazen to us.

In the evening, on the terrace in Obory, a long conversation, "This is an abnormal country," someone says. "On the contrary," I answer. "It's a perfectly normal one between two abnormal ones."

August 1981

EVERY GROWNUP must come to terms with the prospect that he will cease to be. Now, however, for the first time, I see a new kind of phenomenon—society fearing the end of its own life as a society. For some time now, nightmares have been troubling society's unconscious.

Everyone is afraid, afraid now to think about the void that threatens them. For the first time in my life I feel a fear that is more than personal, fear on a national scale. Yesterday the government announced that it was withdrawing a few dozen trains from service and that production has declined as much as 50 percent in certain branches of industry. After this bulletin, there was a deadly silence in the television room. You could feel the fear in the air—the fear of collective death. When, a moment later, there was news about this year's auspicious harvest, everyone breathed a sigh of hope. Some factory had produced 60,000 scythes for farmers instead of the machinery they lacked. Scythes! Now at least a little light is being shed on the matter. Scythes, sickles, nails. To secure food from the earth with one's own hands as in the days of old, perhaps that is more dependable than being in the forefront of steel production. "You should find yourself some village for the winter," I was advised by the far-sighted Tadeusz Konwicki, "some village where there are still huts with wood-burning stoves."

When bicycles were delivered to a sporting-goods store, the line surged forward and broke the door down. Two saleswomen were beaten; the waiting list was torn out of someone's hands, and a woman crumpled it up and swallowed it. We're not breaking down doors yet. On Sunday, at the Bruners' house, I had to exercise moderation at the sight of the home-made tea biscuits and jams. I think it's the first time since the war that I have not eaten my fill. A friend whom we used to meet at the Golden Hive offered me an American cigarette the other day. I took it, thanked him, and then caught a furtive gleam of exasperation in his eyes. You have to be on your toes now to check certain automatic gestures and habits. I should not have accepted that cigarette.

September 1981

RESPONSIBILITY. I will be responsible for the worst that can happen, since it will have been caused by a political system that I at one time accepted. I have borne that knowledge within me for 20-odd years. And it is of no great importance whether I might be able to elucidate psychologically what motivated me then or even whether I would want to. What is important is that one cannot cast off the responsibility for those years and that one's later actions do not set one free from it. Only the simplistic interpretations and the incorrect beliefs can be repudiated, but the error allows for no deletion. It casts back onto the past and one lives with that shadow. I foresee society becoming more acutely aware that the evil of those years is the source and the beginning of the evils that now exist. And then that shadow will grow longer.

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November 1981

YESTERDAY I spoke to the students who have been on strike for two weeks in one of the buildings of Warsaw University. The strike has spread to schools throughout the country, the students protesting the fact that the Engineering Institute in Radom is being forced to accept as its chancellor someone chosen by the party.

Around a hundred people had gathered in the university's Polish studies auditorium. Many questions concerning *A Question of Reality, A Warsaw Diary,* and some of my other books.

When the evening was over, one of its organizers, a tall, good-looking young man, led me out through the dark to the Obozna Street sidegate, which was guarded by students wearing red and white armbands. He walked with me as far as the Old City, asking various questions, speaking intelligently and with a certain judicious tact. When I expressed my concern that he was accompanying me out of politeness, he explained that he wanted to see the street where I lived. "You wrote about those places in your *Warsaw Diary.*" He had been present two days earlier, when I had met with the students on strike at the Drama School. There the discussion had gone beyond purely literary matters. It lasted three hours. In some of the questions they asked, I detected a touch of anxiety: questions about the reality of winning, the chances in the short run, the long run. One of the people involved in the discussion had used the epithet "intellectual weakness." He said that perhaps the doubts and fears people felt stemmed from that weakness. For the love of God, who put that idea in their heads, the idea that the word "intellectual" has a pejorative meaning and can be used slightingly? As in "intellectual wishy-washiness," "intellectual liabilities." Just like Russia—this smacks of Slavophile peasantomania! The Polish intellectuals—those two words signify moral and mental energy, the source of Poland's vital powers during the last 200 years of its history. What would Poland be today had it not been for the work of the Enlightenment, the Romantic intellectual imagination, and the social labors performed by the intellectuals during the period of positivism—Poland without the intellectuals in the Legions and in the Socialist independence movement, the peasant, educational, and cooperative movements? Poland without the intellectuals in KOR and in the "Flying University"? Come to your senses! No, remember.

For three hours, 60 or so students on benches arranged in amphitheater fashion and me down below at a table. For three hours I tried to assure them that there was a real chance. Hard years were coming, all the possibilities, the good and the bad, were open, as well as those that no one could imagine or foresee, things unpredictable from our narrow vantage. Furthermore, I said that the greatest error would be to hypnotize oneself by analogies with the age of the partitions and the age of the uprisings. In the course of the last 200 years, other peoples have extricated themselves from the oppression of empires—the Americans, the Greeks, the Italians, the Belgians—and it has never been written anywhere that Poland is condemned to always bear the burden of futility and defeat. I also maintained that what has been achieved since August, what has already been achieved, is and will remain inscribed in European history as a memorable struggle fought for a society's soul and its rights, and whatever happens, no one can take that spiritual possession away from us. Then a bright, articulate young man, blond and wearing glasses, spoke up from the last row: "I understand. That means there are values for which one must pay the highest price, regardless of the consequences, including the sacrifice of one's own life." I fell silent. The room grew still. "No," I said, "you've misunderstood me. I am not advocating self-destruction." That was all the answer I could muster. It was not an easy moment. My mind had suddenly gone blank. The students seemed to take pity on me, and someone asked what I considered to be the role of the contemporary writer. The void began to fill. I said that I would prefer to cross out the word "role" and replace it with another, "job." For me the "job" of literature is the work a writer does on himself, the working out of the truth of oneself as a human being, a person, a choice of self among the many that one can become. I think that this was my final

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remark. Later they invited me to the cafeteria for tea. Little sandwiches were served; two charming young ladies sat down with me and we discussed the theater.

But that night I kept thinking about the blond young man and how I could have answered him better. I don't know. To nod my head and say, "Yes, including the sacrifice of one's own life, regardless of the consequences," would have been disgraceful. I remember a fragment of Milosz's conversations with Wat in *My Century* about the *auto-da-fé* of the Polish uprisings, when the heaviest burden of responsibility fell, in the end, on the children. Children with rifles in their hands. I had not elaborated on my answer: it had been too brief. Certainly they had expected more from me. It would have been a hundred times better to have admitted to my own uncertainty and to have answered that I did not know or that I did not know any more than they did. Which does not mean that I have lost hope. I can see it before me, vast and vague: I foresee long years of labor, a labor of character and mind, struggle, effort, fatigue. We can lose today, but we cannot lose forever. No doubt, plans to destroy us already exist, but it is impossible to foresee the mysterious plan of other, still-undisclosed elements and the dispensations concealed in the nature of the world, in the future. The plans for our destruction may run aground on that other plan. We must bet on good and against evil, but we must play the game wisely and patiently. Sometimes a nation wins such battles over two or three generations (in India, which showed the world the power of passive resistance, it was the generation of Gandhi and Nehru that won the decisive victory). A struggle of this sort depends on enormous, sustained efforts of mind and will. It is a struggle for oneself. Not only a struggle for freedom. We ourselves are transformed in it. This is the hard work of creating a new configuration of Polish experience. □

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Robert A. Dahl

Democracy in the Workplace

Is It a Right or a Privilege?

Although political theorists who favor worker participation have often emphasized its potentialities for democratic character and its beneficial effects on democracy in the government of the state, a stronger justification, with a more Kantian flavor, seems to me to rest on a different argument: *if* democracy is justified in governing the state, it must *also* be justified in governing economic enterprises; and to say that it is *not* justified in governing economic enterprises is to imply that it is not justified in governing the state.

I can readily imagine several objections to this argument:

(1) A system of self-governing enterprises would violate a superior right to property.

(2) The assumptions that justify the democratic process do not apply to an economic enterprise. In particular—

(2.a) Decisions in economic enterprises are not *binding* in the same sense as decisions made and enforced by the government of a state.

(2.b) Generally speaking, employees are not as well qualified as others to run a company. Thus the argument for the democratic process fails. On the contrary, a government by the best qualified, that is, a system of guardianship or meritocracy, is justified by the marked differences in competence.

Rule by corporate managers, it might be argued, is such a system.

(3) Michels's iron law of oligarchy operates so strongly in economic enterprises that democracy would prove to be a sham. Thus the effort to inaugurate the democratic process within firms is essentially a waste of time.

Property Rights

AS TO PROPERTY RIGHTS, transferring control over the decisions of a firm to its employees, it might be objected, would violate the right of owners to use their property as they choose. If, however, a right to property is understood in its fundamental moral sense as a right to acquire the personal resources necessary to political liberty and a decent existence, then self-governing enterprises would surely not, on balance, diminish the capacity of citizens to exercise that right; in all likelihood they would strengthen it. Even if property rights are construed in a narrower, more legalistic sense, the way a self-governed enterprise is owned *need not necessarily violate such a right*. As we shall see later on, it could entail a shift of ownership from stockholders to employees.

Are Decisions Binding?

HOWEVER, CAN THE ASSUMPTIONS that justify the democratic process reasonably be applied to economic enterprises? For one thing, do economic enterprises make decisions that are binding on workers in the same way a state government makes decisions that citizens are compelled to obey? After all, laws made by the government of a state can be enforced by physical coercion, if need be. Even in a democratic state, a minority opposed to a law is nevertheless compelled to obey it. But a firm, it might be said, is nothing more than a sort of market within which people engage in voluntary individual exchanges: workers voluntarily

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exchange their labor in return for wages paid by the employer.

Decisions made by the government of a firm and by the government of the state, however, are in some crucial respects more similar than this classical liberal interpretation allows for. Like the government of the state, the government of a firm makes decisions that apply uniformly to all workers or a category of workers: decisions governing the place of work, time of work, product of work, minimally acceptable rate of work, equipment to be used at work, number of workers, number (and identity) of workers laid off in slack times, and whether there is to be any work at all—or if, instead, the plant is to be shut down. These decisions are enforced by sanctions, including the ultimate sanction of firing.

Have I now understated the difference? Unlike citizens of a state, you might object, workers are not compelled to obey managerial decisions. Their decision to do so is voluntary. Since a worker may choose to obey the management or not, he is free to leave the firm if he prefers not to obey; and since he cannot be punished by management for leaving, his decision to obey is perfectly free of all compulsion. But an objection along these lines exaggerates the differences between a worker's subjection to decisions made by the government of a firm and a citizen's subjection to decisions made by the government of the state.

Take a local government. A citizen who does not like a local ordinance is also "free" to move to another community. Indeed, if a citizen does not want to obey his country's laws, he is "free"—at least in all democratic states—to leave his country. Now if a citizen were perfectly free to leave, then citizenship would be wholly voluntary; for if a citizen found "voice" unsatisfactory, he could freely opt for "exit." But is not "exit" (or exile) often so costly, in every sense, that membership is for all practical purposes compulsory—whether it requires one to leave a country, a municipality, or a firm? But if so, then the government of a firm looks rather more like the government of a state than we are habitually inclined to believe: because exit is too costly, membership in a firm is not significantly more voluntary or less compulsory than citizenship in a municipality or perhaps even in a country. In fact, citizenship in a democratic state is in one respect more voluntary than employment in a firm.

Within a democratic country, citizens may ordinarily leave one municipality and automatically retain or quickly acquire full rights of citizenship in another. Unlike a citizen of a democratic state, one who leaves a firm has no right to employment in another. Yet the decisions of firms, like the decisions of a state, can be enforced by the severe sanction of firing. Like a state, then, a firm can also be viewed as a political system in which relations of power exist between government and governed. If so, is it not appropriate to insist that the relationship between governors and governed should satisfy the criteria of the democratic process—as we properly insist in the domain of the state?

Let the firm be considered a political system, you might now agree. Within this political system, however, cannot the rights of workers be adequately protected by labor unions? But this objection not only fails to meet the problem of nonunion workers (who in the United States comprise about 80 percent of the work force); it also implicitly recognizes that in order to protect some fundamental right or interest, workers are entitled—have a right—to at least *some* democratic controls. What, then, is the nature and scope of this right or interest? To say that its scope is limited by an equally or more fundamental right to property runs afoul of our earlier analysis.

On what grounds, then, must the employees' *right* to democratic controls be restricted to the conventional (but by no means well-defined) limits of trade unions? Is this not precisely the question at issue: do workers have a fundamental right to self-government in their economic enterprises? If they have such a right, is it not obvious that, however essential conventional trade unions may be in reducing the impact of authoritarian rule in the government of a firm, an ordinary firm, even with a trade union, still falls very far short of satisfying the criteria of the democratic process?

Does the Principle of Equality Hold?

THE GOVERNMENT OF LARGE AMERICAN CORPORATIONS could be seen as a form of guardian-

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ship. Although managers are nominally selected by a board of directors, which in turn is nominally chosen by and legally accountable to stockholders, in reality new managers are typically co-opted by the existing management that also, in practice, chooses and controls its own board of directors. Guardianship has also been the ideal of many socialists, particularly the Fabians. In this view the managers of state-owned enterprises were to be chosen by state officials, to whom the top managers were to be ultimately responsible. In most countries, in fact, nationalized industries are governed by some such scheme. One could easily dream up still other meritocratic alternatives.

Thus in theory and practice both corporate capitalism and bureaucratic socialism have rejected democracy for economic enterprises; explicitly or by implication they uphold guardianship. Because of the overwhelming weight of existing institutions and ideologies probably most people, including many thoughtful ones, will find it hard to believe that employees are qualified to govern the enterprises in which they work. However, in considering whether a principle of democratic equality holds for business firms, it is important to keep two points in mind.

First, while we may reasonably compare the ideal or theoretically possible performance of one system with the ideal or theoretical performance of another, we cannot reasonably compare the actual performance of one with the ideal performance of another. Although a good deal of the discussion of self-governing enterprises that follows is necessarily conjectural, my aim is to compare how self-governing enterprises would probably perform in the real world with the actual performance of their main real-world alternative, the modern privately owned corporation.

Second, a principle of democratic equality does not require that citizens be equally competent in every respect. It is sufficient that they are qualified enough to decide which matters do or do not require binding decisions—for instance, which matters require general rules; of those that do, if citizens are competent to judge which they are sufficiently qualified to decide collectively through the democratic process; and if on matters they do not feel competent to decide for themselves they are qualified to set the terms on which they will delegate these decisions to others.

Except in exceedingly small firms, employees would surely choose to delegate some decisions to managers. In larger firms, they would no doubt elect a governing board or council, which in the typical case would probably be delegated the authority to select and remove the top executives. Except in very large enterprises, the employees might constitute an assembly for "legislative" purposes—to make decisions on such matters as the workers chose to decide, to delegate matters they prefer not to decide directly, and to review decisions on matters they had previously delegated as well as the conduct of the board and the managers in other ways. In giant firms, where an assembly would suffer all the infirmities of direct democracy on an excessively large scale, a representative government would have to be created.

Given the passivity of stockholders in a typical firm, their utter dependency on information supplied by management, and the extraordinary difficulties of contesting a managerial decision, it seems to me hardly open to doubt that employees are on the whole as well qualified to run their firms as are stockholders, and probably on average a good deal more. But, of course, that is not really the issue, given the separation of ownership from control to which Berle and Means called attention in 1932 in *The Modern Corporation and Private Property*. In a much more systematic study published in 1981, Edward Herman found that 64 percent of the 200 largest nonfinancial American corporations are controlled by inside management and another 17 percent by inside management with an outside board, or altogether 81 percent of the total, with 84 percent of the assets and 82 percent of the sales. Although it is reasonable to assume that the percentage of management-controlled firms would decline among smaller firms, the question remains whether workers are as qualified to govern economic enterprises as managers who gain their position by co-optation, producing a sort of co-optative guardianship. The question raises many familiar issues of democracy versus guardianship as alternative politi-

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cal regimes, notably the issues of competence: in making a judgment about the competence of workers, as about citizens in the state; in distinguishing knowledge about the *ends* the collective enterprise should seek from technical knowledge about the best *means* for achieving those ends. The argument might be made that as to ends, self-governing enterprises would produce lower rates of savings, investment, growth, and employment than the "society" might rationally (or at least reasonably) prefer; while as to means they would be unable to supply qualified management and would be less efficient than stockholder-owned firms like American corporations.

Ends: Savings, Investment, Growth, and Employment

HOW WOULD A SYSTEM of self-governing enterprises affect savings, investment, employment, and growth? For example, would workers vote to allocate so much of enterprise earnings to wages that they would sacrifice investment in new machinery and future efficiencies? Would firms run democratically by their employees be more short-sighted than firms run hierarchically by managers? American corporate managers are frequently criticized nowadays for an excessive emphasis on short-run as against long-run returns. Would self-governing enterprises accentuate the sacrifice of deferred to immediate benefits, to the disadvantage and contrary to the collective preferences of their society? If so, would not the particular interests of workers in an enterprise conflict with the general interest?

Purely theoretical analysis by economists, whether critics or advocates of worker-managed firms, is ultimately inconclusive. Advocates of self-management agree that in contrast to conventional firms in which managers seek to maximize total profit for shareholders, the worker-members of self-governing firms would seek to maximize the per capita income of the members. In view of this, some critics have pointed out that members would have no incentive to expand savings, production, employment, or investment unless the effect were to increase their own per capita earnings; and they would have a definite incentive not to do so if they expected that by doing it they would reduce their own earnings. It follows that in some situations in which a conventional firm would expand in order to increase returns to shareholders, worker-managed firms would not.

Advocates of self-governing firms reply that in an economy of self-governing firms, the problem of employment is theoretically distinguishable from the problem of investment and growth. In the theoretical scenario just sketched out, expanding employment is a problem only at the level of the individual firm. At the level of the economy, however, it would be dealt with by insuring ease of entry for new firms. If unemployment existed and enterprises failed to respond to rising demand for their product by expanding employment, new firms would do so; hence both investment and employment would increase. As to investment, except in the circumstances just described, members of a self-managed enterprise would have strong incentives to invest, and thus to save, whenever doing so would increase the surplus available for distribution to themselves.

In the real world, however, these comparisons between theoretical models do not take us very far. As Peter Jay has remarked, it is hardly relevant to compare

> . . . the rational investment behavior of workers' cooperatives with the rational behavior of idealized capital enterprises working according to textbook optimization. If we actually lived in the latter world, we would hardly be considering the problem discussed in this paper at all.[1]

Turning then to the domain of practical judgment, it seems likely that in the real world, self-governing enterprises might stimulate as much saving, investment, and growth as American corporate enterprises have done, and perhaps more, because workers typically stand to incur severe losses from the decline of a firm. If we permit ourselves to violate the unenforceable injunction of some welfare economists against interpersonal comparisons, we can

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[1] Peter Jay, "The Workers' Cooperative Economy," in *The Political Economy of Co-operation and Participation*, A. Clayre, ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980), p. 20.

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hardly deny that the losses incurred by workers from the decline of a firm are normally even greater than those investors suffer; for it is ordinarily much easier and less costly in human terms for a well-heeled investor to switch in and out of the securities market than for a worker to switch in and out of the job market. A moderately foresightful worker would therefore be as greatly concerned with long-run efficiencies as a rational investor or a rational manager, and perhaps more so.

This conjecture is supported by at least some experience showing that, given the opportunity, workers will make significant short-run sacrifices in wages and benefits in order to keep their firm from collapsing. They did so, for example, at both the Chrysler Corporation and the Rath Packing Company. When they own the company themselves, their incentive to sacrifice in order to save it is all the stronger. As a worker in one of the plywood co-ops put it, "If things get bad we'll all take a pay cut. You don't want to milk the cow, because if you milk the cow, there's nothing left. And *we* lose the company."

Perhaps an even more relevant example is the Mondragon complex of more than 80 worker cooperatives in Spain. During a period in which the Spanish economy was expanding generally, the sales of the Mondragon cooperatives grew at an impressive rate, averaging 8.5 percent annually from 1970 to 1979. Their market share increased from less than 1 percent in 1960 to over 10 percent in 1976. The percentage of gross value added in investment by the cooperatives between 1971 and 1979 averaged 36 percent, nearly four times the average rate of industry in the heavily industrialized Basque province in which Mondragon is located.[2] Moreover, when a recession in the Spanish economy led to declining profits in 1981, "investment [was] squeezed, but the workers [were] prepared to make sacrifices to keep their jobs, digging into their own pockets to keep the balance sheets in shape." Members chose to contribute more capital rather than cut their wages. Thus the members of one co-op voted to increase their capital contributions by amounts varying from $570 to $1,700, depending on a member's wage level.[3]

Nor have the self-managed enterprises of Yugoslavia, on the whole, followed the theoretical model described above. Though the causes are complex, with some exceptions they have not sacrificed investment to current income but, on the contrary, have maintained very high levels of investment.

A final observation on the problem of saving, investment, employment, and growth. The introduction of self-governing enterprises *could* be accompanied by the creation of new investment funds operating under democratic control. This was one of the aims of a proposal introduced in Parliament by the Danish Social Democrats in 1973. The proceeds of a payroll tax covering most Danish firms (about 25,000) would be divided, in effect, in two parts. One part—the smaller—would go to a national "Investment and Dividend Fund" that would be used both to beef up Danish investment and to provide a social dividend to Danish workers. Virtually every worker would receive certificates from the fund in an amount that would vary according to the number of years worked, but not according to the employee's wage or salary. The certificates would be nonnegotiable, but an employee would have the right to withdraw the value of his certificates after seven years or at the age of 67; upon death their value would be paid to the employee's estate. The other and larger part of the proceeds from the payroll tax would remain in the firm as share capital owned collectively by the employees, who would vote as enterprise-citizens, that is, one person, one vote. The employees' share of capital, however, and thus of voting rights, would not be permitted to increase beyond 50 percent—presumably a move to reassure private investors. Like the Meidner Plan in Sweden, the Danish proposal is intended to achieve several purposes: greater equalization of wealth, more democratic control of the economy, and, definitely not least in importance, a steady supply of funds for investment.

Thus it is not inconceivable that American workers might enter into a social contract that would require them to provide funds for investment, drawn from payrolls, in return for

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[2] Henk Thomas and Chris Logan, *Mondragon* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1982), pp. 100–105.

[3] The *Economist*, October 31, 1981, p. 84.

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greater control over the government of economic enterprises. If self-governing enterprises proved to be better matched to the incentives of workers than hierarchically run firms, and thus more efficient, this country might have a recipe for economic growth that would outperform even the Japanese—and leave recent American performances far behind.

Means: Managerial Skills and Efficiency

A DISASTROUS ASSUMPTION of revolutionaries, exhibited with stunning naiveté in Lenin's *State and Revolution*, is that managerial skills are of trivial importance, or will arise spontaneously, or will be more than made up for by revolutionary enthusiasm. The historical record relieves one of all need to demonstrate the foolishness of such an assumption. The question is not, however, whether self-governing enterprises would need managerial abilities but whether workers and their representatives would select and oversee managers less competently than is now the case in American corporations, which are largely controlled by managers whose decisions are rarely open to serious challenge, except when disaster strikes, and not always even then. If the self-governing enterprises were to become widespread, it would be wise to provide much wider opportunities than now exist in any country for employees to learn some of the tools and skills of modern management. One reason for the success of the Mondragon cooperatives is the prominent place they have assigned to education, including technical education at advanced professional levels. As a result, they have created their own managers. In the United States, at least, a significant proportion of both blue- and white-collar workers, often the more ambitious and aggressive among them, aspire to supervisory and managerial positions but lack the essential skills. Efficiency and economic growth flow from investments in human capital every bit as much as from financial capital, and probably more so. A system of self-governing enterprises would be likely to heighten—not diminish—efforts to improve a country's human capital.

If in the meantime skilled managers are in short supply, self-governing enterprises will have to compete for their services, as does Puget Sound Plywood, a worker-owned cooperative. The president and members of the board of trustees are elected by and from the members, who all receive the same pay. However, the president and the board in turn select a general manager from outside the membership at a salary sufficient to attract managers who thus earn considerably more than the members themselves.

Unless self-governing enterprises were less competent in recruiting skilled managers, they should be no less efficient in a narrow sense than American corporations at present. And unless they were more likely to evade the external controls of competition and regulation, they should not be less efficient in a broader sense. I have suggested why it is reasonable to expect neither of these to occur.

Yet if self-governing enterprises can be as efficient as orthodox firms, why have they so often failed? As everyone knows who is familiar with American and British labor history, the late 19th century saw waves of short-lived producer cooperatives both in Britain and in the United States. Their quick demise convinced trade union leaders that in a capitalist economy unionism and collective bargaining held out a much more realistic promise of gains for workers than producer cooperatives. In both countries, and in continental Europe as well, labor and socialist movements largely abandoned producer cooperatives as a major short-run objective. Most academic observers, including labor economists and social historians, concluded that the idea of labor-managed firms was a rejected and forlorn utopia irrelevant to a modern economy.

In recent years, however, a number of factors have brought about a reassessment of the relevance of the older experience. These include the highly unsatisfactory performance of both corporate capitalism and bureaucratic socialism, which has stimulated a search for an alternative to both; the introduction and survival—despite severe difficulties—of self-management in Yugoslavia; some stunning successes, such as the U.S. plywood cooperatives and the Mondragon group; formal economic analysis showing how a labor-managed market economy would theoretically satisfy efficiency

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criteria; growing awareness of the need to reduce the hierarchical structure of the workplace and increase participation by workers in order to increase productivity; and the seeming success of many new arrangements for worker participation, control, or ownership in Europe and the United States.

It has become clear that in the past labor-managed firms were often doomed from the start by weaknesses that are not inherent but remediable, such as shortages of credit, capital, and managerial skills. Moreover, in the past producer cooperatives have usually been organized in the worst possible circumstances, when employees desperately attempted to rescue a collapsing company by taking it over—often during a recession. It is hardly surprising that workers may fail to save a firm after management already has failed. What is surprising is that workers' cooperatives have sometimes succeeded where private management had failed. It was from the failure of privately owned companies that the plywood co-ops started.

I mentioned the Mondragon producer cooperatives as an example of success. They include the largest manufacturer of machine tools in the country, as well as one of the largest refrigerator manufacturers. During a period of a falling economy and rising unemployment in Spain from 1977 to 1981, employment in the Mondragon co-ops increased from 15,700 to about 18,500. Unless they are denied access to credit—the Mondragon complex has its own bank—self-governing enterprises have a greater resiliency than American corporations. For in times of stringency, when an orthodox private firm would lay off workers or shut down, in a self-governing enterprise the members can decide to reduce their wages, curtail their share of the surplus, if any, or following a prosperous period even contribute additional capital funds, as at Mondragon. As these and other cases show, self-governing enterprises are likely to tap the creativity, energies, and loyalties of workers to an extent that stockholder owned corporations probably never can, even with profit-sharing schemes.

Although rigorous comparisons of the relative efficiencies of labor-managed and conventional corporations are difficult and still fairly uncommon, the best analysis of a broad range of experiences in a number of different countries appears to support these conclusions: *participation by workers in decision-making rarely leads to a decline of productivity*; far more often it either has no effect or results in *an increase in productivity.*[4]

How Much Internal Democracy?

OFTEN THE EFFECTS of more democratic structures have been greatly exaggerated by both advocates and opponents. Yet just as the democratization of the authoritarian structures of centralized monarchies and modern dictatorships has transformed relations of authority and power in the government of states, so there is every reason to believe that the democratization of the government of modern corporations would profoundly alter relations of authority and power in economic enterprises. Relationships of governors to governed of a sort that Americans have insisted on for 200 years in the public governments of the state would be extended to the hitherto private governments in the economy. If too often exaggerated, it is nonetheless a grievous mistake to underestimate the importance of democratic institutions in the domain of the state. It is also a mistake to underestimate the importance in the daily lives of ordinary people of authoritarian institutions in the sphere of work. To be sure, democratic structures do not escape Robert Michels's "iron law of oligarchy." But Michels's "law" is neither iron nor a law. At most it is a universal tendency in human organizations; and it is often offset, if never wholly nullified, by a universal tendency toward personal and group autonomy and the displacement of strictly hierarchical controls by at least some degree of mutual control. It is not unreasonable to expect that democratic structures in governing the workplace would satisfy the criteria of the democratic process neither markedly worse nor markedly better than democratic structures in the government of the state.

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[4] The most rigorous analysis to date is in the studies contained in *Participatory and Self-Managed Firms,* Derek C. Jones and Jan Svejnar, eds. (Lexington, Mass.: Lexington Books, 1982). □

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Deborah Meier

"Getting Tough" in the Schools

A Critique of the Conservative Prescription

The release of a half-dozen prestigious reports on schooling in America has initiated, according to Secretary of Education T. H. Bell, "the greatest, most promising development since the turn of the century." Schools are, again, big news.

Diane Ravitch, a serious neoconservative historian and educational writer, provides an intellectually respectable description of the circumstances that have, presumably, necessitated these "promising developments." This is what gives her new book, *The Troubled Crusade*,[1] its importance today and explains its extensive and positive reception. Although modest in tone, it builds a case for Bell's agenda and provides background for other official reports. To understand its impact, let us see how it fits into the current educational hoopla, and then examine it on its own merits.

The current recipe for reform is clear: more tests, more homework, longer school hours, mandated state requirements, stiffer standards for promotion, stricter discipline codes, merit pay and, sometimes, tuition tax credits. This litany is not new. There has been a consensus in the popular media since the early 1970s that educational standards have "declined" and that a "return to basics" is needed. What is new is that these major reports are the product of a combination of forces—political, educational and, above all, corporate. Together they have agreed on one solution: "get tough." Ravitch's book, in its own way, comes to the same conclusion.

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The reports of the National Commission, the 20th Century Fund, and the Education Commission of the States are primarily focused on how schools can better serve a flagging economy. Ravitch offers an interesting departure. It's Jefferson's call for a "crusade against ignorance," not the needs of the economy that, she says, she's concerned with.

Like the National Commission, Ravitch sees the American public schools as a remarkable triumph. They have been endangered, however, by well-intentioned but ultimately corrupting defects that she generally lumps together under the label of "permissive progressivism." This progressive ideology was defeated after the war, or fell of its own flabby weight, to be replaced briefly in the late '50s by what Ravitch enthusiastically calls "a pedagogical revolution." Initiated by alarm over Russia's launching of Sputnik, the new reforms were, however, soon thwarted by concern for equality rather than excellence. Despite major achievements, made possible by an enormously expanded federal presence in education, American schools witnessed a dangerous decline in quality. They tried to do too much and did most of it badly. To redress this problem, we must limit our scope and build a more rigorous program based on the ideals of a liberal education for all.

It is a familiar argument, with its neoconservative stress on the virtues of "limiting our vision." But a familiar story, well-told, can add new insights. To assess Ravitch's contribution it might help to examine how she deals with three recurring themes:

(1) the interdependence of democracy and education;

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(2) the unintended negative effects of the reforms of the 1960s that were aimed at eliminating the educational gap between classes and races;

(3) the claim that schools work best when they limit themselves to cognitive and/or academic goals.

Democracy and Education

RAVITCH TREATS as a received truth the idea that democracy rests upon formal education, that ignorance breeds tyranny, and that without literacy representative government will falter. A serious writer whose task is to report on the status of Jefferson's "crusade" cannot, however, afford to rest on such attractive platitudes. Does it not matter how we define both education and democracy? Shouldn't we ask what kind of knowledge, gained under what kind of circumstances? And is all this not affected by the kind of problems that children will encounter when they enter the adult world?

The drive by successive waves of new immigrants to seek emancipation through formal schooling is enlightening. Equally enlightening is the history of schools at the service of elites: making some people feel superior and others inferior, some self-confident and others powerless. Equally enlightening are the persistent failure of democratic countries to close the gap between the educational achievement of lower- and upper-class students. Enlightening too is the compatability of high levels of literacy and intellectual talent—even lots of high culture—with some of the world's cruelest tyrannies.

By leaving such complexities virtually untouched, Diane Ravitch contributes to muddled thinking about the relationship of schools to society, particularly the connection of schools to powerful political and corporate institutions. Avoiding the issue enables Ravitch, for example, to accept the dubious popular notion that school priorities in the '60s and '70s were set by disadvantaged minorities. It enables her to assume that we can safely rely in the '80s on a corporate interpretation of priorities. This is the kind of question that cannot be examined critically if we do not recognize the problem itself.

The impact of modern technology—a rallying slogan for much of the current debate on education—is not quite what the National Commission on Excellence glibly and optimistically suggests. In fact, the economy does not need an enormously expanded, intellectually more sophisticated labor force. An intellectually more rigorous education will not put America's youth back to work. The job prospects for most Americans are bleak; an increasing number of the jobs that will become available will require low levels of skill and at most an elementary education.

If you want to discuss the relationship of schools to democracy, you cannot skip over the school's historic connection to employment. To presume that schools are unaffected by the condition of the labor market is either naive or deceptive. When we fail to acknowledge the dual function of schools we paper over an important reality.[2]

Facile platitudes about democracy also obscure a related phenomenon. While there is a notable distance between theory and practice in all schools, it is greater in some than in others. And this difference is largely determined by social class. Ravitch spends time on race, sex, and other "handicapping" conditions, but class, like the needs of the labor market, she renders invisible.

There is a conservative tradition, accepted also by many latter-day progressives, that some children, perhaps most, are frustrated and embittered by undue complexity—either the complexity of having to make choices or of having to deal with subtler subject matter. Such elitist views have long been openly held in European countries, although in the United States they generally take the form of disputes over IQ scores.

When John Dewey wrote his famous 1916 manifesto, *Education and Democracy,* he was challenging this traditional view. Despite his efforts, neither the progressive movement he helped start, the "pedagogical revolution" of the late '50s, nor the "romantics and rebels" of the '60s altered the inner workings of most schools that poor and working-class children attended. True, all children now had to go to school for a longer time, and hard-pressed teachers had to invent new ways to manage,

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amuse and, if they could, educate at least the most "promising." On Chicago's South Side, for example, many schools in low-income areas still had bolted-down desks well into the '60s. Penmanship, weekly spelling tests, a board full of computation tasks requiring a lot of copying, and good manners—these were the staples in such schools.[3]

Anyone today who visits elementary schools that are attended mainly by low-income children notes the prevalence of programmed scripts based on behavior-mod techniques, reading "kits" consisting of hundreds of unrelated paragraphs followed by multiple-choice questions, and reams of ditto sheets. Lower-class schools are often devoid of books (except perhaps workbooks, readers, and *the* textbook); instead of libraries they have remedial reading and audiovisual "labs." It's not universal, but it's common.

The trouble is that while Ravitch sees the liberal arts as a bulwark of democracy, and progressivism as its enemy, something entirely different has really been going on, and it was neither "liberal" nor "progressive." To understand why, it's necessary to consider what working-class parents see as the relationship between schools and their real lives. They are not blind to the fact that the employment opportunities available to their children signify certain priorities. Unless they're prepared to see the school as an agent for social change, they know that the "real world of work" their children must face is not exactly a model of democratic citizenship. That's at least in part the rub, and one Ravitch avoids. To talk nobly of schooling and democracy while ignoring the issue of work is an intellectual evasion.

One reason, after all, that poor and working-class parents are often ambivalent, if not downright hostile, to schools that seek to "empower" children is precisely this concern. "They don't need all that fancy stuff," they complain, "just make them obedient and do their work." The teacher is the boss; that's the way life is, and they may as well learn it young. (Modern, more self-confident, and better organized parents may not, in fact, always take the boss's side against their children.)

Well-to-do children, in contrast, are expected to enter occupations with a far wider latitude for independence and autonomy. They are, furthermore, expected to use their leisure time to promote culture and participate in democratic political life. For these more affluent and more privileged families, the ideals of good citizenship and appropriate job habits are not so clearly in conflict. The school may be mildly repressive, but it is trying to educate on the basis of a model that matches children's own ideals of "adulthood." For such children, the teacher is not a "boss" but a guide and model.

When the educational progressives raised the question of schools and democracy, they saw them as critically interdependent. They saw the school as a major shaping force, the first public domain children confronted. The school is a society in its own right, said Dewey, not simply preparation for life. If it was to be supportive of democratic values, then its citizens (the students) needed to develop the kind of "constructive intelligence" that would enable them to rethink answers to social problems, *including issues of work,* in a systematic manner.

However misguided their answers, these were the issues that the giants of progressive education grappled with, both theoretically and experimentally. At a time when employment possibilities for young people are rather bleak, Dewey's central question becomes even more pressing. Ravitch's response is rhetoric, devoid of precisely the contextual detail that might help us see the connections between contemporary education and democracy.

Schools and Equality Since 1960

RAVITCH ACCEPTS the notion that schools in the postwar period should have sought and did seek to maximize "equality." In 1945 "one's educational chances were limited by the accident of birth and by the color of one's skin." By 1965 schools were explicitly ordered to break this "correlation between social class and educational achievement." (Ravitch generally equates social class with race.) In the words of President Johnson, whom she quotes approvingly, the schools must provide not merely "equality of opportunity" but "equality as a fact, as a result." This was and is the rhetoric of

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the powerful "accountability movement" and the "more effective schools" strategies in vogue today. It is one of the rationales offered for city and state efforts to centralize curriculum and standards, with a concomitant loss in influence by the local community as well as the individual teacher.

The extraordinary expectation that schools can produce equal results logically requires one of the following three assumptions:

(1) that the educational and cultural background of the family is irrelevant to a child's school success (being advantaged is of no advantage to our offspring . . .);

(2) that we can design a curriculum that bypasses any family advantages;

(3) that we can transform schools in some other substantial and meaningful way.

Even if we ignore the impact of poor nutrition and health, or the unequal financial resources available to families to supplement public expenditures on education, children still do not enter the race as equals. Parents who already speak in the vocabulary of the school cannot avoid providing their children with a continuous competitive edge in a system built upon rank order. Even with additional resources, the disadvantaged will always be, on the average, behind. And if, by some near-miracle, they did improve their rank, causing a relative decline in the status advantage of some other more powerful constituency, might not the rules be changed?

A look at the changes over the years in reading tests given to first-graders suggests that this may be just what has occurred. The standardized tests given in the pre-1960 epoch were substantially shorter and easier than any in use today. Older tests consisted of alphabet-recognition items, initial consonants, and two- and three-line phrases and "stories" accompanied by pictures. Tests like these are now given to kindergarteners, and first-graders are held back based on tests formerly given to older children—requiring complex phonetic information, the reading of substantially longer paragraphs, more complex questions, and no pictures. The stakes were raised, and thus the ranking has remained the same.

The second idea—building a "culture-fair" curriculum that does not favor middle-class children—has become popular lately among urban educators responding to the demand for equal test results. Every child is to be exposed to the same unambiguous, explicit, and sequentially ordered curriculum, albeit some may have to do it more than once till they get it "right." If teachers and children are to be held accountable, then, this idea assumes, schools should only teach what can be measured objectively. The first casualties are generally the "liberal arts," both because they are harder to tailor to such specifications and because they are considered a luxury anyway. It does not, therefore, seem an option for Ravitch.

Nor is Ravitch interested in exploring the third possibility: that the challenge to produce equal in-school results might require a redefinition of achievement and new ways of measuring it (see my article in *Dissent,* Fall 1981, on reading tests). She also scorns related reforms aimed at altering the curriculum, pedagogy, or the ways schools relate to the children's culture and community. In fact, she defines these kinds of reforms as the problem. (Granted, no one would argue that all the reforms offered were serious or sensible.) Thus we're left with the noble goal of "equal results" minus a practical strategy.

Furthermore, she is not willing to accept either of the "escapes" frequently offered. She does not defend a two-tier system, in which some children are expected to engage in higher-level thinking and others are given an explicitly watered-down curriculum or pushed out altogether. Nor does she accept the position—put forth by such critics as Christopher Jencks and Lester Thurow—that schools were never a sensible vehicle for achieving equality, if we define equality in terms of an eventual fairer distribution of income. And there is considerable evidence that, at least for those previously denied access, a lessening of the wage gap was a major goal of their support for educational equality. The two were assumed to go together. Ravitch rejects a consideration of this whole question since "Americans had long ago decided, without much discussion . . . that education would be the best vehicle through which to change society." But maybe a little discussion *would* be healthy? If the connection

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between schools and society is more complex than the public has acknowledged and conventional rhetoric encourages, then schools will continue to bear the brunt of *unexamined,* perhaps mistaken, expectations.

Despite all of this, Ravitch doesn't raise an eyebrow at the demand that schools create equal results. She's for it. She contends that it was made difficult to attain during the 1960s largely by the understandable but unfortunate oversensitivity of black militants to looking at their own family structure, and the poor judgment of well-meaning romantics and ideological rebels.[4]

Ravitch acknowledges the existence of a persistent, age-old "democratic dilemma." The traditionalists with whom she most sympathizes—Robert Hutchins, Arthur Bestor, Paul Woodring—had trouble translating their ideals into forms applicable to mass education. In fact, she admits, they "*failed to confront the question at all.*" Such a failure is of more than passing interest in light of the fact that it was the main concern of those misguided "reformers and romantics," as well as a key to the mandate Ravitch accepts: to teach all with more or less equal success, in a manner that meets elite standards.

She willingly confronts the dilemma: it just turns out not to be so complex. More homework, tougher grading, fewer electives, and more tests: "toughness" and "rigor" will apparently do the trick. Whatever the merits of these perennial favorites, they hardly seem responsive to an age-old "democratic dilemma." Does she imagine that Hutchins, Bestor, et al. hadn't the wit to think of these cures also?[5]

Writers about schools get away with such pitifully superficial palliatives—worthy of TV talk shows—so long as they operate on a level of rhetoric and abstraction that removes them from confronting the classroom day by day.

The best conceived curriculum cannot be tested in the abstract. The university specialists who designed "new math" in the late '50s learned this the hard way. Somewhere, sometime, one must investigate what happens as teachers and children pursue an actual curriculum. Not Ravitch. The most famous contemporary observer of children's efforts to learn, Jean Piaget, makes it into her book just once, to score a point against a popularizer of open education. Ravitch has left the whole area of classroom experience and children's learning almost untouched. Not perhaps out of lack of sympathy (she tells us she sympathizes). Just lack of knowledge?

In the only section in which she tries to look at classrooms, she manages to thoroughly distort some important potential sources. *Thirty-Six Children,* by Herbert Kohl, is *not* a description of how he replaced the "prescribed curriculum" (tough?) with one that "encouraged children to express themselves through creative writing" (easy?). Kohl, in fact, describes an effort to build a rigorous sixth-grade curriculum around mythology, which included having children do a great deal of writing. James Herndon did *not* write about his "triumphs over his principals, the other teachers, and the system." Herndon's books are models, in fact, of collegial compassion. He reports with sensitivity and some amusement how his often ornery pupils dealt with his innovations, and he acknowledges having had minimal success in changing anything. John Holt's *How Children Fail* did *not* describe schools "that crush the joy of learning." That book was about both his favorite school and his favorite teacher. It was not joy but children's strategies to avoid learning that concerned him and that he carefully described.

The popularity of these books lay in their capacity to evoke scenes teachers recognized, while also provoking them to think more deeply about their meaning. We had seen these students in our classes. (We'd also seen students like some of those described.) We'd been similarly confused, outfoxed, and embarrassed. We knew that even if we shared the classic ideals of Robert Hutchins, we were unable to translate them into practice because of the conditions of our job, the situation of our students, the nature of the school, or our own inadequate knowledge about teaching and learning. As for the platitudes—we knew them only too well.

Unlike many writers who described schools, Kohl, Holt, and Herndon understood that real children needed breakfast and lunch, even if that seemed downright nonintellectual; that parents and children who felt humiliated or disrespected (for reasons that often baffled us)

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could make our lives miserable; that real children got restless and bored even when we thought we were being clear and inspiring, felt intimidated even when we thought we were being understanding. It wasn't, to paraphrase Herndon, "the way it was supposed to be."

On Cognitive Goals and School Limits

IF EDUCATION is to serve democracy, says Ravitch, schools must accept a more limited function. Schools failed, she claims, whenever "their leaders and their public alike had forgotten their real limitations as well as their real strengths."

The appropriate "limited" goal is variously described by Ravitch as "cognitive," "academic," and "intellectual." The three terms have separate histories of use and meaning that are themselves revealing. And none of them leads inexorably to any particular set of curricula or pedagogical practices. They don't even set obvious "limits," since many of the practices Ravitch proceeds to criticize were justified on strictly "cognitive" grounds.

Two of the critics of progressive education whom Ravitch invokes on behalf of these limited goals are Robert Hutchins and historian Arthur Bestor. Bestor's attack on the mushy-minded establishment progressives appeared in the mid-'50s. He made a passionate appeal for a system of mass education aimed at teaching "the power to think." Hutchins asked for even more. "Our mission . . . is to change our environment, not to adjust ourselves to it," he declared in an attack on the conservatism of the '50s school establishment. America, said Bestor, does not need a program that "substitutes 'life needs' " for the disciplines of science, math, history, and foreign languages; "children do not need schools to learn how to blow their noses and button their pants."

Ravitch, like Bestor, forgets that "socialization" and "life needs" were not invented by progressives. Consider the stated goals of 19th- and 20th-century schools aimed (as historian Ravitch is well aware) at lower-class and immigrant pupils whose manners and behavior needed "Americanizing." Even the most conservative prep school emphasizes a version of "life needs"—only there it's called "character-building." Learning to be a good sport, a team member, a leader, and a "gentleman" has always occupied a prominent place in schools to which elites send their young. If Bestor wanted the masses "furnished with the strengths that had made the old ruling classes great and powerful," perhaps these nonacademic concerns needed to be duplicated too.

In fact, to call for a solely "academic" focus is far from traditional and may only be a way of side-stepping critical questions. There is an inevitable "hidden agenda" of "life needs" implicit in any choice of courses and manner of delivery. The real issue is how and which "life needs" are implemented.

Ravitch's dismissal of such concerns leads one to wonder if it is really Hutchins's and Bestor's call for renewed intellectual content that she is championing when she calls for "limits." Is it the traditional "academy," previously offered only to the elite, that she has in mind for the masses?

Ravitch's treatment of the preschool program Head Start is an important case in point. She chides Head Start for accepting an early-childhood approach in which "cognitive goals were no more important and often less important than social, medical, and psychological services, nutrition, adult career development, and parent involvement." Head Start's failure is blamed on an unwillingness to establish limited "cognitive" goals. To make this point, Ravitch ignores the plethora of studies that indicate Head Start succeeded in precisely those long-range academic goals that she favors.[6]

More troubling, however, are the implications of Ravitch's critique of Head Start's intellectual/cognitive curriculum. We know what she thinks Head Start should not have been. But what *would* a "cognitively oriented" program for three- and four-year-olds be like? Even Bestor, after all, might not reject helping infants "blow their noses and button their pants." But Ravitch would exclude not only a child's health, nutrition, and improved family life, but also "free play and permissive adult-child relations" typical of middle-class nursery schools. What she wants is "structured learning." But learning what, and structured how? Isn't there a point where she must tell us?

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Are the classrooms in which four-year-olds fill in workbooks more "cognitive" than those in which children work with sand, soil, animals, and blocks? Is a classroom organized around well-planned social and individual activity less structured than a room in which a teacher directs children on how to fill in their ditto sheets? Is instruction on verbal "concepts" such as over/under, the alphabet, and the names of the basic colors what Bestor meant by teaching "the power to think"? In accordance with the current demand for "rigor," many infant programs have abandoned both a concern for the family *and* all subject matter, replacing it—in the name of "cognition"—with isolated verbal skills taught in a vacuum of intellectual content. Is this the kind of elite academy Ravitch is offering the masses? (Would she have middle-class nurseries also abandon their traditional priorities?)

Lurking behind this apparently clear classification system of what's "cognitive" and what isn't, there are several unexamined assumptions that may have nothing in common with the broad love of culture and the study of human achievements that Bestor and Hutchins were defending. "Easy and nonverbal electives" may make a handy target (they're apparently bad even for preschoolers). But while their opposite—tough, verbal, and required—may sound inspiring, it hides a sleight of hand.

The new common wisdom on behalf of "tough, verbal, and required" masks widely *divergent* agendas. Neither "the power to think" nor the knowledge and skill needed "to change our environment" is synonymous with such criteria.

Ravitch perceptively notes, in another connection, that "those who see the school as the leading edge of social change believe they can shape the values of children in ways that are broader, more humane, and more liberated than those of their parents." She chides them for failing to recognize that parents and community might be "appalled by the arrogance of educational theorists who presume to impose their values on other people's children." But not only progressives "impose" their values on other people's children. So do proponents of "high" culture and a more rigorous liberal-arts curriculum, whether they are progressives or traditionalists, Dewey or Hutchins—or Ravitch.

POLLSTERS REGULARLY REMIND US that most parents, while deploring "current standards," have always been and remain remarkably satisfied with the curriculum.[7] When dissatisfaction is expressed, few favor more liberal arts. More vocational preparation to enhance their children's job prospects tops the list of recommendations. Shall we tell them these are "noncognitive" and thus taboo? Shall we be elitists and "impose" our values? Or shall we slip the liberal arts in under misleading arguments for "toughness" and hope "they" won't notice?

Ravitch is not alone in questioning whether we are best served by letting children "choose what they want . . . if they want. . . ." But the difficulty is that there is more than one other choice. And "seeing that each and every one . . . receives a liberal education" is by no means the unanimous choice of those who are backing "rigor." In the name of "getting tough," Texas is now considering dividing children in the sixth grade into vocational, general, and elite tracks. Even if equally tough on all, it is not equally "liberal."

Texas is not alone. Many of the same corporations offering us their renewed commitment to schools are also advocating an earlier focus on career education, with an avowed interest in inculcating better "work habits and attitudes." Granted, young people are probably interested in and need to know about the "world of work" and how to deal with it. But a whole program designed around vocational skills is, needless to say, not often offered to those who can handle the academic/intellectual curriculum. Nor, in courses designed to introduce students to work, are intellectual and cognitive issues raised about the "real world" that might demystify the workings of our economy or suggest to students the possibility that human beings might alter current work relationships or employment patterns. In fact, the National and State Commission reports are blunt about the appropriate ideology of career education.[8]

That Ravitch ignores this development, often welcomed by hard-pressed parents desperate for some kind of job future for their children, is an inexcusable instance of her careless

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bias. The young people who seek vocational schools—some of them find there the first meaningful contact with both subject matter and teachers—are vulnerable to the "life needs" rhetoric of the corporations. Why doesn't Ravitch take on these powerful institutions in the way she takes on the "life needs" progressives?

To Ravitch it seems self-evident why ignorance about ancient civilizations or algebra is more dangerous to the future of democracy than ignorance about how to repair your automobile or ignorance about sex (two particular targets of her essays). It doesn't rest on which is "harder," which is "required," or whether the subject is presented "verbally." We've all known courses on ancient Greece that were easy and used audiovisuals. And we could certainly devise an automotive course meeting her three criteria—tough, verbal, and required.

THOSE OF US who want to perpetuate the liberal arts can rest our case on the power to impose and intimidate—or we can develop a reasoned argument aimed not merely against certain anti-intellectual critics of the left but at persuading the broader public of the liberal arts' value.

The liberal arts require a coherent defense. The nature of that defense will help us understand both why and how they should be taught. If we fail to provide a defense, we are implicitly abandoning Jefferson's "crusade." The particulars that go into creating the ideal "well-educated" citizen are not sacred nor historically frozen: they too are subject to democratic debate. To advance the claims for a liberal education one must risk looking at its history, risk acknowledging that there may be various paths to "cognition" and "intelligence," and that knowledge can never be entirely separated from the setting in which we learn it or the way in which it is taught.

"Is the traditional high-status curriculum valued by society *only* for social/historical reasons," asks English author and critic Gabriel Chanan in an attempt to defend the liberal arts, "or does it have intrinsic qualities connected with the mastery of reality?"[9] If the function of the traditional curricula is to provide a "mastery of reality," various choices could, after all, exist. One criterion in looking at choices, *from a democratic viewpoint*, is whether their mastery helps us not only in the exercise of power but also in the capacity to criticize power effectively.

The importance of "abstraction, writtenness, and so on"—features common to traditional liberal-arts programs—may be attributable to "the particular history associated with dominant social groups, or it may be attributable to nothing more mysterious than that many middle-class jobs have an administrative, centralizing element." Or, Chanan suggests, it may be essential also to the exercise of the social and political power needed to change the world.

Chanan wants to defend, not just impose, "the educational value placed upon abstraction and writtenness . . . even though it also has a fetishistic element." He suggests, furthermore, that a liberal-arts curriculum focused on "formal culture" need not be posed as an "alternative" to all other curricula. To do so "is to present an ultimatum; either you renounce your native identity and world views or you cannot have access to our special resources." For Chanan, the heart of the "democratic dilemma" is how to make the "formal culture" accessible to all without requiring a renunciation of a student's own culture.[10] Schools, Chanan proposes, can offer a "unified" approach without leading to a uniform one. The liberal arts might thus even become a source of pleasure, not merely an unpleasant duty.

David Hargreaves, another English critic, in grappling with the same set of problems on a more empirical level, recognizes the centrality of the issue of "honor" and "dignity" as it relates to social class and school failure. He comes up with a somewhat different solution.[11] Yet neither Chanan nor Hargreaves has solved this dilemma. What is required is experimentation in the real schools, and the time and patience to observe and modify. In the process, more than one solution may be adopted in different places. But both Chanan and Hargreaves are asking the kind of questions that Ravitch fails even to recognize.

What we are not required to do in order to prove our devotion to the liberal arts is reflexively mimic a particular 19th-century curriculum and the pedagogic style that went with it.

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The debate is not between "permissive progressives" and the advocates of a liberal-arts education, nor between "life needs" and "cognition." And surely the new holy trinity, "verbal, tough, and required," provides an insufficient if not downright intellectually dishonest criterion for measuring what's worthy of inclusion. Yes, of course, there are "limits," but Ravitch's approach is more likely to lead to different limits for different kids; and we've been *there* before.[12]

IN HER 320 PAGES ON SCHOOLS since World War II Ravitch offers *not a word* about the massive introduction of standardized tests and standardized curriculum programs tailored to them. Since 1945 there has been a virtual revolution in the use of tests, test-oriented pedagogies, and test-related technologies. The recent revival in several states of the 19th-century notion of "payment by result"—by which schools would get financially rewarded for producing higher student test scores—offers a glimpse of where we might be headed.

As a consequence there has been a shift in decision-making from the classroom to the program experts who design the new teaching/testing programs and also determine what are acceptable measures of success. The removal of parents, and now teachers, from important decision-making roles has serious political consequences for a democratic society. It also affects the meaning of teaching. When teachers lose control over their subject matter, they turn in desperation to method courses. To separate the issue of classroom "management" from the content of the course is to turn pedagogy into a set of gimmicks. It is in the struggle to make a particular subject matter "belong" to the student that pedagogy becomes important; but that requires teachers who "own" their own subject matter, rather than ladling out a prescribed program.

The content of education has also been severely affected by this narrowing of curriculum to what can be quantitatively measured on a multiple-choice test, and then fit into a normal curve. What is left out is everything Hutchins was championing, and what remains is precisely what he derided as "miscellaneous dead facts."[13]

Moreover, the focus of normative testing has played a major role in the trend toward defining all those in the bottom portion of any particular curve as "deviant," in need of "special education," thus justifying the systematic removal of ever larger groups of children who are not "making it" on normative scales. As they are removed from the rolls of "regular" schools we have an illusory feeling that standards have gone up (it's a bit like neighborhood "gentrification"). But the losers do not disappear, except from our immediate view. The proliferation of "special education" enrollments is partly a triumph. Some kids do need to be provided with special services. But it has also become a way of trying to look more successful by merely redefining our population.

In her preoccupation with the critics on the "left," Ravitch has not noticed these far more powerful and widely practiced challenges to Arthur Bestor's belief that "serious intellectual training is not beyond the reach of the masses."

Underlying many of the apparent contradictions between Ravitch's professed goals and her analysis are unexamined class biases that run throughout this book as well as through many of the recent reports. The casual repetition of the cliché that the "racial revolution" diverted a promising "pedagogical revolution" and that "the pursuit of excellence" was soon "overshadowed by concern about the needs of the disadvantaged" contains an unexamined assumption: it depends, doesn't it, upon one's vantage point?

For those who were teaching in schools in which poor and working-class children spent their time, or for those millions of Americans whose children attended such schools, there was no such conflict. For the first time they saw the possibility that their schools might emerge from out of the shadows, might be exposed to some "excellence." The implication that we did something for "those" children, at the expense of excellence, is untrue. But more serious, it's invidious. Regardless of Ravitch's intentions, it sets the stage for once again abandoning the disadvantaged in the name of "excellence."

Throwing clichés at old problems is even more popular these days than throwing money

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was once supposed to be, and it is even less successful at solving them. The new litany of "toughness" will produce neither excellence nor equality—and surely not both. It won't alter the connection between social class and school achievement, beat the Russians and Japanese, nor eliminate unemployment. And it certainly won't help beleaguered children or their teachers in their daily struggle with classroom realities.

Notes

[1] *The Troubled Crusade: American Education, 1945–1980*, by Diane Ravitch. New York: Basic Books, 1983.

[2] If corporations are deeply involved in setting our educational priorities, we might consider how well armed we are for the day when they might conclude, as does conservative economist Warren Robinson, that Americans are dangerously overeducated, and that this is a major factor in the decline of U.S. productivity. Robinson, in an article in *Education Week*, October 5, 1983, p. 24, argues that it's time to return to the old days when all but the very gifted among the needy paid the full cost of their higher education. For the good of the economy, *and* a happier work force!

[3] According to Ravitch, progressive educators rejected the teaching of such traditional subjects as English, math, history, and science. They rejected a daily schedule with time allotted for specific subjects. They rejected tests, and all other forms of competition for grades or rewards. They rejected reliance on textbooks, as well as the domination of the classroom by teachers in terms either of curriculum planning or discipline. Where were the schools that meet this description? Based on *her* list, it seems hard to think of any place in America where such "progressivism" dominated educational practice. Some progressive ideas—more experiential learning, recognition of individual differences, etc.—were introduced, but they never replaced the traditions described above. And many schools were never exposed to these innovations.

[4] Ravitch can't decide whether the '60s reforms were a success or not. She refers to the "unqualified success of the social revolution initiated by the Brown decision," a "rising level of educational attainment for the population as a whole," the "continued pre-eminence of research and scholarship" on the university level. Yet she also claims that we've witnessed declining achievement and severely lowered standards. In this respect she echoes the contradictions rampant in all the major reports that also argue both sides of the case—glowing triumphs of American schools and dire emergency straits facing us. Our world status, no less, is at stake! *When* the time was that "mediocrity" was not predominant remains, as always in this field, a mystery Ravitch can't solve for us.

[5] Actually, Arthur Bestor did try to confront the problem. Based on an assumption that children varied only in the rate at which they could handle the identical material, he proposed a highly complex reorganization of schools into different tracks, moving through the same body of knowledge at different speeds (not unlike some current notions of "mastery learning"). He thought it would be pretty simple, given his enormous faith in the efficacy of IQ tests and his limited knowledge about young children.

[6] Two interesting examples are the Perry Preschool Project carried out by the High Scope Educational Research Foundation—an 18-year study of 123 Head Start students in Ypsilanti—and the Lazar Study sponsored by the Department of Health, Education and Welfare. The latter, entitled *Lasting Effects After Preschool*, pools 12 investigations of long-term effects and is reported fully in the *New York Teacher*, December 16, 1979.

[7] See the Annual Gallup Poll, in the September 1983 *Phi Delta Kappan*, on public attitudes toward schools.

[8] The Task Force on Education for Economic Growth of the Commission of the States advocates the teaching of "basic employment and economic competencies" such as "the ability to engage in interpersonal relationships. . . , cope with the requirements concerning attendance and punctuality," understand "personal economics" and "our basic economic system—profits, revenues, basic laws of supply and demand."

[9] Gabriel Chanan, "Culture and Equality in Education," *Educational Research*, vol. 8, no. 7, pp. 108-16.

[10] Children do differ enormously, regardless of social class and/or race. They each bring with them their own "culture," an individual way of seeing reality. The culture of schools, with its specific norms, can also make intelligent middle-class children seem inadequate misfits. We all are in the position of the "deviant" in some subjects, having difficulty making sense of material in the way "the teacher" expects. A school that develops ways to communicate greater respect for "deviants" will be doing a service to more than the poor or racial minorities.

[11] David Hargreaves, *The Challenge of the Comprehensive School* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1982).

[12] Ravitch says nothing about tuition tax credits—a curious omission—and startlingly little about teachers' unions. However, the 20th Century Fund Report, in which Ravitch participated, is fairly explicit in its attack on unions. A "trade union mentality" is blamed for the promulgation of endless bureaucratic paperwork, and unions are held responsible for transforming "what had once been a noble though poorly compensated profession" into a craft concerned with bread and butter issues—money and job security.

[13] The standardized testing rage has even seriously undermined some foolish elite schools: why practice writing if examinations only require a No. 2 pencil in order to fill in precoded answer sheets? □

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Gordon Beadle

George Orwell and the Neoconservatives

American conservatives are not generally given to celebrating the political wisdom of English left-wing socialists, yet this has been the curious fate of George Orwell. From the very beginning of his literary success in this country, the creators of the myth of the conservative Orwell would appear to have deliberately ignored Orwell's own interpretation of his work. Although Orwell lay dying of tuberculosis while the American conservative crusade gathered momentum, he insisted upon issuing "a sort of *dêmenti*" against what he took to be a deliberate misreading of *1984*. The *dêmenti* took the form of a letter to Francis A. Henson of the United Auto Workers. The pertinent portions of the letter appeared in *Life* (June 25, 1949) and the *New York Times Book Review* (July 31, 1949):

> My recent novel [*1984*] is NOT intended as an attack on Socialism or on the British Labour Party (of which I am a supporter) but as a show-up of the perversions to which a centralised economy is liable and which have already been partly realised in Communism and Fascism. I do not believe that the kind of society I describe necessarily WILL arrive, but I believe (allowing of course for the fact that the book is satire) that something resembling it COULD arrive. I believe also that totalitarian ideas have taken root in the minds of intellectuals everywhere, and I have tried to draw these ideas out to their logical consequences. The scene of the book is laid in Britain in order to emphasise that the English-speaking races are not innately better than anyone else and that totalitarianism, IF NOT FOUGHT AGAINST, could triumph anywhere.

Orwell's interpretation of *1984* went largely unnoticed, but the enormous commercial success of *Animal Farm* and *1984* gradually brought Orwell's lesser known works back into print. Collections of his essays, journalism, and letters began to appear and by the late 1960s Orwell had become a kind of cult figure of the liberal anti-Communist left. Americans were now confronted with the Orwell who had fought with an army of the extreme left against Franco in Spain. Conservatives had to reckon with the Orwell who was convinced that only a socialist revolution could save Britain from defeat in World War II and the Orwell whose fervent anticommunism was rooted in the suspicion that communism was "merely a particularly vicious form of state capitalism."

American conservatives have long admired and envied the British ruling classes. But to Orwell, "they were simply parasites, less useful to society than fleas on a dog." When confronted by the depression and the rise of fascism, they escaped "into stupidity." They were a class that had declined during the interwar years to the point where "stuffed shirts like Eden and Halifax could stand out as men of exceptional talent." Stanley Baldwin was not even a "stuffed shirt. He was simply a hole in the air." Chamberlain was beneath contempt and there was little respect even for Churchill. In the face of such revelations, the image of the conservative Orwell quickly evaporated, and subsequent political studies have centered largely on the question of precisely where Orwell belongs on the complex spectrum of the socialist left.

Now, suddenly, American conservatives, under the new banner of "neoconservatism," have once again attempted to claim Orwell. Why,

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one might ask, should they turn for comfort to a revolutionary socialist such as Orwell at this late date? Norman Podhoretz recently provided the answer. After taking note of the remarkable posthumous rise in Orwell's reputation as an essayist, Mr. Podhoretz concludes that "it is, after all, no small thing to have the greatest political writer of the age on one's side: it gives confidence, authority, and weight to one's own political views." Orwell, as Podhoretz readily admits, is a writer "well worth stealing." Stealing or willfully bowdlerizing? According to Podhoretz, Orwell was never much of a socialist—"beyond a generalized faith in 'planning' he never showed much interest in the practical arrangements involved in the building of socialism." It seems that he was no revolutionary either. Neoconservatives "deny that Orwell was a revolutionary: they think of him instead as a major critic of revolution." Having detached Orwell from socialism and revolution, Mr. Podhoretz has no difficulty in presenting Orwell as one of the "guiding spirits" of the neoconservative Committee for a Free World.

Well, if Orwell was neither a socialist nor a revolutionary, then what was he doing in Loyalist Spain in 1936, where he went to write and stayed to fight in the ranks of an army representing the most revolutionary section of the Spanish working class? Orwell leaves the reader of his moving memoir of the Spanish Civil War with little doubt as to his motives for fighting in Spain.

> I came to Spain with some notion of writing newspaper articles, but I had joined the militia almost immediately, because at that time and in that atmosphere it seemed the only conceivable thing to do. . . . The revolution was in full swing. . . . It was the first time that I had ever been in a town where the working class was in the saddle. Practically every building of any size had been seized by the workers . . . almost every church had been gutted and its images burnt. . . . Every shop and café had an inscription saying that it had been collectivized. . . . Waiters and shopwalkers looked you in the face and treated you as an equal. . . . The revolutionary posters were everywhere. . . . The loud-speakers were bellowing revolutionary songs all day and far into the night. . . . In outward appearance it was a town in which the wealthy classes had practically ceased to exist. Except for a small number of women and foreigners there were no "well-dressed" people at all. . . . All this was queer and moving. There was much in it that I did not understand, in some ways I did not like it, but I recognized it immediately as a state of affairs worth fighting for.

Orwell's revolutionary Barcelona, with its gutted churches, collectivization extending down to cafés and bootblacks, strictly enforced economic equality, and absence of well-dressed people, surely comes close to a description of the ultimate neoconservative political nightmare. Yet the future "guiding spirit" of the Committee for the Free World "recognized it immediately as a state of affairs worth fighting for."

After Spain, Orwell's personal war with communism began in earnest. But the nature of Orwell's opposition to communism was always revolutionary, not conservative. In their frequent references to Orwell's anticommunism, neoconservatives forget (or deliberately omit) the fact that his bitter condemnation of communism was based on the belief that communism was a reactionary force dedicated to the suppression of any genuine social and economic revolution. The Communists in Spain, Orwell insisted, betrayed the workers by deliberately preventing a real revolution from taking place: "The whole world was determined upon preventing revolution in Spain. In particular the Communist Party, with Soviet Russia behind it, had thrown its whole weight against the revolution." The conservative press, "with its tales of red revolution financed by Moscow, was even more wildly wrong than usual. In reality, it was the Communists above all others who prevented revolution in Spain." Orwell's *Homage to Catalonia* was written largely with the intention of exposing the Communist betrayal of the revolution in Spain. Yet Orwell emerged from the Spanish Civil War less disillusioned with socialism than conservatives generally assume. "I have seen wonderful things," he wrote shortly before leaving Spain, "and at last really believe in Socialism, which I never did before."

George Orwell was not one of those English

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socialists of the 1930s who loudly supported revolutionary socialism abroad and lived contentedly with capitalism at home. "I do not see how one can oppose Fascism," he concluded in January 1937, "except by working for the overthrow of capitalism, starting, of course, in one's own country." Now Podhoretz contends that "with the outbreak of World War II, a new Orwell was born—Orwell the English patriot," and he cites "My Country, Right or Left" as one of "his most memorable phrases. . . ." However, Orwell the patriot remained very much Orwell the revolutionary. "My Country, Right or Left" is actually the title of an essay in which Orwell declared that "only a revolution can save England," and he did not shrink from the possibility of violence to achieve it: "I dare say the London gutters will have to run with blood. All right, let them, if it is necessary. But when the red militias are billeted in the Ritz I shall still feel that the England I was taught to love so long ago and for such different reasons is somehow persisting."

Orwell's renewed sense of patriotism led to a series of sharply worded attacks upon Marxists, pacifists, and other elements of the Socialist left whose motives he questioned. But this was not really a "new Orwell." It was more like a heightened version of the old Orwell of the highly controversial *Road to Wigan Pier*. He took his self-appointed role of critic and conscience of the left very seriously, even if he was not always fair in his criticism. Indeed, Orwell sometimes sharply condemned views and positions that he himself had only recently abandoned. But he could certainly turn a memorable phrase, and neoconservatives have frequently attempted to trade on his wit and integrity by quoting him out of context. For example, Norman Podhoretz and Jeffrey Hart are fond of using the vivid description of the social deviants of the English socialist movement that appears in *The Road to Wigan Pier*: "One sometimes gets the impression that the mere words 'Socialism' and 'Communism' draw towards them with magnetic force every fruit-juice maker, nudist, sandal-wearer, sex-maniac, Quaker, 'Nature Cure' quack, pacifist, and feminist in England." Very amusing from the neoconservative point of view, but Podhoretz and Hart take care not to point out that *The Road to Wigan Pier* is in fact a sustained argument in favor of a socialist society.

On the page preceding the above quotation, Orwell warned the reader that he was "arguing FOR Socialism, not AGAINST it." He was simply admitting that "as with the Christian religion, the worst advertisement for Socialism is its adherents." Orwell feared that the Marxists and the crank elements of the English socialist movement were discrediting the cause of socialism in the eyes of the common people he celebrated in his novels. The central thesis of *The Road to Wigan Pier* was that socialism had "been buried beneath layer after layer of doctrinaire priggishness, party squabbles and half-baked 'progressivism' until it is like a diamond hidden under a mountain of dung." The diamond must be recovered. Socialism must stand for "justice and liberty" and regain its anticapitalist revolutionary posture. Well said, but not exactly a neoconservative message.

The point has often been made that Orwell was a lonely, solitary figure who stood outside of the age in which he lived. True enough in some ways, but he was also very much a man of his times. To assume, as Orwell did, that only a socialist revolution could save Britain from defeat in World War II seems absurd or at best naive in retrospect. But we must remember that revolution was in the air. Richard Rees, Orwell's friend, later drew attention to the extraordinary "political hysteria" of the late '30s. He vividly recalled "the revolutionary toasts and dialectical-materialist cocktails which flowed like water wherever progressive intellectuals foregathered." Orwell sternly resisted the "dialectical-materialist cocktails," but not the intoxicating revolutionary spirit of the times, especially after the "wonderful things" he had witnessed in Spain. But Spain was not Britain. The revolutionary intellectuals of England were would-be leaders without a revolutionary army and Orwell's vision of red militias in the Ritz soon faded under the stress of war. Toward the end of 1944 Orwell admitted with characteristic honesty that in taking

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the view that "the war and the Revolution are inseparable," he had made "a very great error." He attributed this rather gross misreading of the political climate of Britain to wishful thinking.

With victory now in sight, Orwell turned his attention to the impending General Election and the practical arrangements of building a democratic society in the postwar era. His major fear was that the Conservatives would "conduct a whirlwind campaign, present themselves as 'the party that won the war' . . . promise everything under the sun, and then chuck everything down the drain as soon as they were back in office." Orwell was pleased with the Labour victory of 1945, but not with the behavior of the Labour government. In one of his London newsletters to the *Partisan Review*, he insisted that no Labour government really "means business" unless it "(a) nationalises land, coal mines, railways, public utilities and banks, (b) offers India immediate Dominion Status (this is a minimum), and (c) purges the bureaucracy, the army, the diplomatic service, etc., so thoroughly as to forestall sabotage on the Right." By nationalization of the land, Orwell meant that the state should "certainly impose an upward limit to the ownership of land (probably fifteen acres at the very most), and . . . never permit any ownership of land in town areas."

Orwell had previously advocated the strict "limitation of incomes" on such a scale that "the highest tax-free income in Britain does not exceed the lowest by more than ten to one." He called for a "reform of the educational system along democratic lines" that should begin by immediately "abolishing the autonomy of the public schools and older universities and flooding them with State-aided pupils chosen simply on grounds of ability." A Labour government that "meant business" would also abolish the titles of the "so-called aristocracy," close the House of Lords, and disestablish the Church of England. Orwell rather grudgingly favored "retaining the Royal Family," but only because "modern people can't, apparently, get along without drums, flags and loyalty parades" and "it is better that they should tie their leader-worship onto some figure who has no power."

This is not the place to evaluate the political viability or wisdom of Orwell's proposals. I merely wish to point out that Orwell did in fact take considerable interest in "the practical arrangements of Socialism." But again, it is not the sort of prescription for human progress that one would expect from one of the "guiding spirits" of neoconservatism.

Another area of embarrassment for the neoconservatives lies in Orwell's unremitting war against the Roman Catholic church. As early as 1932, Orwell was taking "great pleasure" in taunting Catholic theologians and converts to the faith. But his real quarrel with the Roman church turned on his belief that "its influence is and always must be against freedom of thought and speech, against human equality, and against any form of society tending to promote earthly happiness." Accepting the Catholic point of view meant "accepting exploitation, poverty, famine, war and disease as part of the natural order of things." The Catholic church was not only opposed to humanitarian reforms, it was "pro-Fascist, both objectively and subjectively." In Spain, Orwell was pleased to discover that "churches were pillaged everywhere and as a matter of course, because it was perfectly well understood that the Spanish Church was part of the capitalist racket." During the dark days of World War II, he virtually accused the English Catholics of plotting treason. "If anything corresponding to a Pétain Government were established here," he wrote in 1941, "it would have to lean largely on the Catholics. They are the only really conscious, logical, intelligent enemies that democracy has got in England."

Catholicism was also seen by Orwell as a sinister influence in the literary world. He was convinced that the destruction of intellectual liberty that went with "Orthodox Catholicism" had "a crushing effect upon certain literary forms, especially the novel." Orwell accused Catholic writers from Chesterton to Graham Greene of debasing their talents and ruining their work by becoming Catholic propagandists. In view of the enthusiastic conservative response to Mr. Buckley's cloying presentation of the *Brideshead Revisited* TV series, it is

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worth repeating what Orwell had to say in his notes for a projected essay on Evelyn Waugh. Like so many other critics, Orwell identified the "driving forces" of Waugh as "snobbery" and "Catholicism." As for *Brideshead Revisited*, Orwell drew attention to the "last scene, where the unconscious man makes the sign of the Cross. Note that after all the veneer is bound to crack sooner or later. One cannot really be Catholic and grown up."

It should go without saying that the Catholic church that so aroused Orwell's anger was the Church that supported Mussolini and Franco and made its degrading Concordat with Adolf Hitler, the Church of the Index and the Legion of Decency—and *not* the Church of the era following that of Pope John XXIII. But the old reactionary, politically one-eyed Church that Orwell hated is pretty largely the Church that conservative Catholics long for and hope to revive.

Given the radical nature of Orwell's politics and the ferocity of his attacks on Roman Catholicism, one would logically expect Mr. Buckley's ultra-rightist *National Review* to look upon George Orwell as a kind of unholy cross between Jane Fonda and Bertrand Russell.

But not so. In May of 1983, the *National Review* featured an essay in which Mr. Robert de Camera paid very respectful "Homage to Orwell." Mr. de Camera concludes that the "forces of darkness have huge armies, a bigger and better arsenal, liberation movements, and the whores' allegiance. The forces of light have Orwell on their side and draw strength from it." Perhaps so, provided one can properly distinguish "the forces of light" from "the forces of darkness."

Now before the discovery of Orwell-the-neoconservative escalates into a right-wing literary cottage industry, it might be well to briefly describe just how this seemingly impossible shell game is played. The usual method, with some interesting minor variations, is to ignore or deliberately blur the distinctions between socialism, communism, and Marxism and then string together carefully selected quotes from some of Orwell's more pointed attacks on the Soviet Union, Communists, Marxists, authoritarian socialists, and pacifists. The conservative conclusion becomes fairly obvious, provided that Orwell's own revolutionary program is carefully concealed and the real nature of his criticism of the Soviet Union and communism is largely ignored. But the Orwell of the '30s cannot be entirely ignored, so he is said to have undergone a patriotic conversion at the beginning of the war or, as Mr. de Camera would have it, "with the Goths at the gates, the leftist swaggering stopped." Here the strained credibility of the neoconservative argument turns on one's willingness to accept the notion that conservatives have such a monopoly on patriotism that patriotic utterances can be equated with a "conversion" to the conservative cause. But the problem here is that the patriotic Orwell was initially convinced that only a radical socialist revolution could save Britain from "the Goths at the gates." As the war progressed, his "leftist swaggering" found concrete expression in the series of radical socialist reforms that I have outlined. And Orwell, of course, never understood the "conservative" implications of his patriotism and went on calling himself a socialist until his death in 1950.

Generally unnoticed is a brief and unsuccessful neoconservative attempt to capture Orwell in Britain as early as 1945. We now turn to the rather comic political career of the Duchess of Atholl. During the Spanish Civil War, as Orwell was later to recall, "the Red Duchess as she was affectionately nicknamed," was "the pet of the *Daily Worker* and lent the considerable weight of her authority to every lie that the Communists happened to be uttering at the moment." But by 1945, the ex-Red Duchess had shifted sharply to the political right and was leading a belated campaign against Russian domination of Eastern Europe. That is to say, she had taken the dramatic left-to-right political shift that characterizes the modern neoconservative. The Duchess was one of the founding figures of the anti-Communist League for European Freedom, an earlier, more limited version of Mr. Podhoretz's Committee for the Free World. Though Orwell made light of the League for European Freedom, he was nevertheless asked to join and speak at one of its rallies. Modern neocon-

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servatives would do well to ponder the implications of his response:

> Dear Duchess of Atholl,
>
> I am afraid I cannot speak for the League for European Freedom. I could easily get out of it by saying that the date is impossible or what is quite true—that I know nothing about Jugoslavia, but I prefer to tell you plainly that I am not in agreement with the League's ultimate objectives as I understand them.... I cannot associate myself with an essentially Conservative body which claims to defend democracy in Europe but has nothing to say about British imperialism. It seems to me that one can only denounce the crimes now being committed in Poland, Jugoslavia, etc. if one is equally insistent on ending Britain's unwanted rule in India. I belong to the Left and must work inside it, much as I hate Russian totalitarianism and its poisonous influence in this country.
>
> Yours truly
>
> [George Orwell]

Political converts, like religious converts, not only sing the loudest; they also assume that everyone is ripe for conversion to their cause. But anyone who takes the trouble to read his published work carefully is likely to conclude that George Orwell was no more ripe for a conversion to neoconservatism than, say, Alfred Kazin, after his return from a neoconservative revival meeting at the Plaza. It seems more likely that Orwell would have dismissed neoconservatism as merely another one of those "smelly little orthodoxies which are contending for our souls." □

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Shlomo Swirski

The Oriental Jews in Israel

Why Many Tilted Toward Begin

We continue in this issue our series of articles dealing with Israeli society and politics. In our next issue we shall carry studies of the Israeli economy and the resurgence of religious fanaticism.

This series has been made possible by a grant from Mr. Harry Kahn and we wish here to thank him. — EDS.

In Israel, the term "Orientals" refers to Jews who immigrated from Moslem countries—mainly from North Africa and the Middle East. The Israeli state bureaucracy designates them as "those originating from Asia and Africa." The Israeli public in general and social scientists in particular usually refer to those Jews as *Edot Ha'Misrach*—the Oriental communities. Both designations "Asian and African" and "Oriental communities" evoke the association of plurality and variety.

In that sense, both terms were correct at the time of immigration; for the Jews who came from Morocco, Iraq, Yemen, Iran, Syria, and other Moslem countries did represent a variety of communal experiences. However, the continued use of these terms serves to disguise the fact that after they arrived in Israel, most "Asian and African" Jews, or "Oriental communities," underwent a common social life experience, to the extent that a new collective identity has emerged. The term *Misrachim*—Orientals—reflects this new identity and is, in fact, being used more and more by Oriental activists.

This article was written before the resignation of Prime Minister Menahem Begin, which has no bearing on its argument.—S.S.

AFTER THE ROMAN SUBJUGATION of the Judean kingdom and the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 A.D., the Jewish people dispersed throughout the Mediterranean basin and the Middle East. For the next 15 centuries this area was the main habitat of the Jewish people. The Islamic empire, established in the seventh century, after the Arabs' conquest of most of this area, provided the Jews with a renewed unified cultural and economic framework: a common language (Arabic), participation in a unified imperial commercial network, and a common religious organization and hierarchy, headed by the Babylonian Geonim (the eminent scholars and judges who wrote the Babylonian Talmud).[1]

In the 10th century, this empire began to split apart, and within its old realm there now arose several Jewish foci: Iraq, Egypt, and Spain. Of the three, Spain—in Hebrew *Sepharad*—is the best known, both for the economic well-being and the cultural creativity of its community. The following centuries witnessed a continuous confrontation between the rising Christian West and the weakening Islamic East: in the form of the Crusades, the Reconquista in Spain, and the commercial competition between Italian city-states and Moslem merchants.

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This confrontation came to a climax, in terms of Jewish history, around the end of the 15th century, with three more or less simultaneous events: (1) the conquests and rise of the Ottomans, with ensuing—and continuous—warfare between the Christian realms and "the Turk," which meant, in practice, the rise of a geopolitical, economic, and cultural barrier between the two zones; (2) the expulsion of the Jews of Spain—the *Sephardim**—most of whom crossed over to Turkish lands, dispersing among the local Jewish communities, or establishing new and distinct centers of their own as they did in Greece, Bulgaria, and present-day Turkey; (3) Portugal's discovery of the round-the-cape route to India, which by-passed the trade routes dominated by the Moslems—signaling the beginning of the Moslem countries' rapid decline, as well as the expansion of the power of Christian Europe throughout the world.

Small Jewish communities had existed in Christian Europe ever since Roman times. In the 10th and 11th centuries, some of these communities, especially those in the Rhine valley, attained a measure of self-identity as the Jews of *Ashkenaz*—the Hebrew word for the German territories. Numerically, however, these Jewish communities remained much smaller than those of the Moslem countries.

In the 14th and 15th centuries, many of these Ashkenazic Jews emigrated to Poland, where they gained a high measure of security and economic well-being, playing an important role in Poland's development into a major grain exporter to Western Europe. Over the following centuries, Poland became the site of the largest Jewish community in the world: its numbers rose from about 10,000 in 1500, to about 750,000 before the partitions of Poland at the end of the 18th century.[2] The partitions created large Jewish communities in Russian, Prussian, and Austrian lands. Yet despite the variety of political settings, East European Jews maintained a high degree of uniformity and community, from common language—Yiddish—to form of residence—the *shtetl*.

The rise of the Jewish community of Poland, paralleled by the decline of the Moslem East in general and its Jewish communities in particular, was reflected in a demographic turning of the tables: while up to the 15th century the majority of world Jewry was, by today's nomenclature, "Oriental" or "Sephardic" and Ashkenazim constituted only a tiny minority, by the beginning of the 19th century, 2 million out of the estimated 2.25 million Jews in the world were European (and mostly East European)—that is, Ashkenazim. Because of their rapid demographic increase, by the 1880s—that is, on the eve of the rise of the Zionist movement—they constituted 7 million out of the estimated 7.5 million Jews in the world.[3]

All this is necessary background for a picture of the developments that took place in the last century. Before proceeding, we should note that the divide between Christian Europe and the "lands of the Turk" also existed within the Jewish people. The contacts between communities on opposite sides of the divide were few, and this was especially true in regard to the Oriental communities not located near the shores of the Mediterranean, as those in Yemen or Iraq.

The first effective and continuous contacts were established as a consequence of the European imperialistic penetration of the Middle East and North Africa in the 19th century. In the framework of those contacts, European Jews tended to regard their Oriental brethren in the same way Europeans as a whole regarded inhabitants of Moslem lands: as strange, exotic, and backward people. One outcome of those contacts was the establishment, missionary-fashion, of a network of schools—by the Alliance Israélite Universelle—designed to bring European culture to the "native" communities.

ZIONISM BROUGHT ABOUT the first massive encounter between Oriental and Ashkenazic Jews—in Israel. Here the demographic tables were turned once again. The Ashkenazim, who are still the majority among world Jewry, even after the Holocaust, constitute somewhat less than half of the Jewish population of Israel—in

* The term "Sephardim" is often used to refer to all the Jews of Moslem lands. This, however, is not correct; for the Sephardim were distinct communities, especially in the Balkans and in Palestine, and also in parts of Western Europe and the Americas. Today, some, but not all, feel solidarity with the Oriental Jews in Israel.

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1981, 47.5 percent of the first- and second-generation Israeli Jews. (Third-generation Israelis are not listed by the country of their family's origin in the publications of the Israeli Bureau of Statistics. This figure includes immigrants from Greece and Bulgaria, most of whom are Sephardim.) The Oriental Jews now constitute the majority of the Israeli Jewish population—52 percent in 1981. (This figure includes the immigrants from Turkey, who are mostly Sephardim.)[4]

The seeds of the present-day division of labor between Orientals and Ashkenazim in Israel were sown at the very beginnings of the Zionist movement. Zionism was initiated by European Jews, as one response to the crisis of Jewish existence throughout Europe, and especially in Eastern Europe. The members of the Zionist organizations were European Jews, and their activities were oriented almost entirely toward European Jews. Zionism portrayed itself as the movement for the liberation of the entire Jewish people—but European Jews tended to think and act as if the Jews in the rest of the world counted for rather little, and did not really need to be consulted and recruited.

It is thus not surprising that the majority of the Jews who immigrated to Palestine before 1948 were Europeans—they constituted 87.5 percent of all Jewish immigrants in the period from 1919 to May 1948.[5] The 12 percent who came from Moslem countries, however, gave Palestine a high overrepresentation of Oriental Jews, for at the time they constituted only 3 percent of world Jewry.[6] The main reasons for the small number of Oriental immigrants who came to Palestine prior to 1948 (relative to the post-1948 period) are, first, the favorable social and economic status of their communities and, second, the lack of any major organized effort on the part of the Zionist movement to recruit them—as it recruited European Jews.

Following the Holocaust, as the leadership of the Jewish community in Palestine realized that what it had regarded as the major source of membership for the Zionist movement had been practically destroyed, it turned its attention to the Jews of Moslem lands. There was hardly any time to reorganize, however, for the military confrontation between the Jews in Palestine and the Palestinian Arabs and the armies of the Arab states in 1947–49 created an impossible climate for the Jews living throughout the Middle East and North Africa. Within a short period of time, they evacuated en masse to the new state of Israel. Whole communities were transplanted—most of the 130,000 Jews of Iraq, the 45,000 Jews of Yemen, and the 35,000 of Libya—as well as substantial parts of other communities, from Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia in the west to Iran in the east. From 1948 to 1956, a total of some 450,000 Jews arrived in Israel from Asia and Africa—compared to 360,000 Jews from Europe and America.[7]

Israelis turn to this period of "mass immigration" when they try to explain the present-day inequality between Ashkenazim and Orientals. Until fairly recently, most explanations were based on two assumptions with regard to that period. First, having come from culturally and economically backward societies, the Orientals could not easily fit into a modern Western context such as Israel; thus they entered the lower echelons of the absorbing society. Second, many of the problems that the Oriental immigrants encountered in Israel had to do with the fact that the mass immigration presented an overwhelming burden for the absorbing society, which in 1948 comprised only 650,000 Jews, and which had just emerged from a bloody war of independence and faced not only continuing Arab hostility but also financial insolvency. Therefore the new immigrants could not be given the kind of helpful reception that new immigrants to Israel received in later years.

The fact that generations of Israelis, past and present, Ashkenazim as well as Orientals, were satisfied with this explanation is in itself an important aspect of the present-day situation. This is still the prevalent explanation, despite the large amount of contradictory evidence that has accumulated in recent years. For example: (1) Oriental Jews who immigrated to the West fared better than those who immigrated to Israel.[8] (2) Of the limited resources that were at the state's disposal in the early 1950s, European immigrants got a better share than did Oriental immigrants.[9] (3) To-

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day, inequality between Israeli-born Orientals and Ashkenazim is greater than it was for the immigrant generation[10]—despite the fact that today's Oriental youth is not being raised in a "culturally backward" society but in modern, Western-style Israel.

The period of mass immigration is a critical one for understanding inequality in Israel today. I don't think, however, that we should search for an explanation in the socioeconomic characteristics of the Oriental Jews in their countries of origin, nor in the insufficient economic means that were at the disposal of the young state of Israel. We should, rather, look at the role played by the Orientals in the developmental processes that took place in Israel after their arrival.

To begin with, the contention that Orientals emigrated from backward societies to a modern one not only reflects a gross and stereotypical generalization regarding all of North Africa and the Middle East—especially with regard to the role of the Jews in the economies of their countries of origin. But, most important, this contention constitutes a gross exaggeration of the state of the Israeli economy at the time of independence.

Generally speaking, one could best describe the activities of the Jewish settlers in Palestine during the British Mandate as gaining a foothold by settlement of the land. Some 40 percent of the capital outlay of the Jewish communal organizations was spent on the purchase of land and agricultural settlement.[11]

Otherwise, in all areas of economic activity the scale was small, the capacity for initiative low, and the potential for investment quite restricted. The large-scale economic development that turned Israel into a highly industrialized society, with a modern, sophisticated managerial apparatus, supported by a relatively large scientific-technological structure, took place only after 1948—that is, after the Orientals had arrived. "Modernity," then, is not something the Orientals met as a finished process, but rather something in whose creation they took part.

The rapid development of Israel after 1948 was made possible by various factors: the formation of an independent state apparatus that could, as the leading entrepreneur, set its own goals for development; the appropriation of the real estate and enterprises of the Arab refugees; the flow of capital from abroad—from Jewish donations, German reparations, and U.S. government loans; and the flow of new immigrants, which, on the one hand, made for the expansion of the home market and, on the other, provided the labor power necessary for large-scale economic development. In this process, the Oriental immigrants constituted, in the main, a relatively cheap, mobile, and manipulable labor force.

The following pages deal with the process by which Orientals became the industrial and white-collar Jewish proletariat of Israel, a process that involved the simultaneous transformation of Ashkenazim into the governing, managerial, and commanding class. The emphasis in this analysis is on the meaning of class affiliation within the present-day Israeli social structure. A related point, which will not be dealt with here, has to do with changes in class standing caused by immigration to Israel. Lacking a thorough and comparative study on the subject, all that can be said is that while for many Orientals, especially villagers and urban proletariat, immigration brought an improvement in the standard of living, for a substantial stratum, especially those who had been engaged in commerce, administration, and the professions, immigration brought a change for the worse, at least for the first generation; the motif of *déclassement* is a very salient one in Israeli Oriental literature.[12]

In comparison, for most East European Jews, immigration brought substantial improvement, especially in the postindependence era. This, too, is a salient literary motif: in the words of Amos Oz, one of Israel's better-known Ashkenazic writers, the well-to-do people of the *shtetl* who derided the young socialist pioneers for going to malaria-infested Palestine can burn with envy in their graves now that those same pioneers live in fancy houses "paneled with teakwood and decorated with real Italian marble and Danish furniture."[13]

Because of their rather hurried evacuation, the Oriental immigrants had come without any preparation, and they had to leave most of their

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capital and goods behind. For reasons we will discuss later, they lacked an independent organizational infrastructure of their own. Thus they were highly dependent on the Israeli public absorption apparatus for everything, from food, clothing, and basic expenses to housing and employment. Lacking effective organization of their own, they were also unable to formulate and carry out alternative directions of development—directions that would have been more in keeping with their previous economic experience than the plans actually carried out by the Israeli entrepreneurial complex. Finally, none of the organizations built by Ashkenazic veteran settlers provided specific protection and support to the Oriental immigrants. The Histadrut—the Israeli federation of labor unions—is the most obvious example: throughout the 1950s it openly condoned the process that widened the gap between the incomes of professional and top-echelon workers (mostly Ashkenazim) and those of the lower-echelon workers (mostly Orientals).[14]

As a cheap, mobile, and manipulable labor force, the Orientals played a central role in various stages of the postindependence economic development. First, they took part in the growth and development of agriculture. Second, and more or less simultaneously, they played a decisive role in the great construction effort of the 1950s. Third, they played a key role in the rapid industrial development that began in the late 1950s—especially in labor-intensive industries such as textiles, diamonds, metals, chemicals, and minerals. I would like to give brief sketches of the developments in each of these areas.[15]

• *Agriculture:* The first Israeli governments set a high premium on the development of agriculture, both as a way to avoid dependence on imports for feeding the population and as a way to establish effective Jewish control over all areas of the country—foremost over border areas and the lands left by Palestinian refugees. The Oriental immigrants played an important role in all aspects of agricultural development.

First, they provided much of the manpower for the settling of the land. The number of agricultural settlements increased from 326 in 1948 to 723 in 1960. Most of the increase came from new moshavim—cooperative farm communities—and Oriental immigrants constituted 65 percent of the population of these moshavim. We should note that the population of most of the moshavim was ethnically homogeneous, and that the new Oriental moshavim received fewer means of production from the authorities and consequently had a lower income than the veteran—and mostly Ashkenazic—moshavim. They fared even worse in comparison with the kibbutzim (Israel's communal farms), both old and new.

Second, Oriental immigrants were found in higher proportions than Ashkenazic immigrants—not to mention the veteran settlers—in all branches of agricultural production where intensive, nonmechanized and nonskilled labor was required. The most salient example was the citrus industry, which became the number one agricultural product of Israel, and the number one export. Another example was grape-growing and vintage. A third was cotton, at the time not yet mechanized, which was to become a major product of Israel's agriculture. We should note that the wages for agricultural labor were the lowest in the country; this was especially true for female laborers, who did most of the picking and packing in the citrus groves.

Third, Oriental immigrants played an important role in the large-scale projects for the development of the agricultural infrastructure, which were initiated by the government to relieve rampant unemployment throughout the 1950s. The projects included drainage works, soil improvement, removal of stones from fields, rejuvenation of abandoned agricultural land, and afforestation. The Orientals provided most of the necessary wage labor: in afforestation work, for instance, they constituted 75 percent of all workers. In these areas, too, wages were very low, especially as in many cases the workers were given unemployment compensation instead of regular salaries.

The development of agriculture, made possible by generous governmental support, greatly benefited the owners of the agricultural means of production and distribution, who now had the chance to expand and prosper. Almost all of them were Ashkenazim. And many of them

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—the veteran kibbutzim and moshavim, Tnuva (the largest distributor and processor of agricultural produce), the agricultural banks—were part of the economic empire controlled by the labor movement through the Histadrut. This fact, of course, is relevant from the vantage point of the 1977 and 1981 elections.

• *Construction:* The mass immigration created a large demand for housing, and it provided a large pool of laborers who could be directed into construction. In the 1950s and '60s, most construction workers were new immigrants, and among them Orientals were overrepresented. This was especially true in the lower ranks of the construction labor force. Wages in construction were a bit higher than those in industry and agriculture at the time; however, most of the workers were employed on a temporary basis, which meant that their overall income was low. Profits in construction, on the other hand, were high, and this resulted in the rapid expansion of construction firms. The owners of the firms were Ashkenazim, and some of the most outstanding examples of growth occurred in firms controlled by the Histadrut—that is, by the labor movement. Solel Boneh, Israel's largest contracting firm, grew to such an extent that it could take on new projects and new directions even after the construction boom was over—that is, even when high demand, cheap labor, and easy financing were no longer the rule.

The housing produced by all this construction was differentially distributed between Orientals and Ashkenazim. The Orientals were more dependent than the Ashkenazim on governmental housing, which was of lower quality than private and Histadrut housing projects. It often was located in outlying areas where Ashkenazim, both new immigrants and veteran settlers, refused to live. The differences in the quality of housing became a permanent feature of the differentiation between Orientals and Ashkenazim in Israel.

• *Industry:* Toward the end of the 1950s, when agricultural development reached a saturation point and construction could not provide more employment, the government initiated a concerted effort to industrialize the country. In 1958 the Industrial Development Bank was established, and the next year the Knesset passed a new law to attract investment capital. Between 1959 and 1965, industry absorbed 35 percent of the new recruits into the labor force; it came to employ one quarter of all employed persons.

Orientals soon were overrepresented in most branches of industrial production. Surely, the widespread contention that the problems of absorbing the Orientals into Israeli society stemmed from the fact that, having come from nonindustrialized societies, they could not adapt to an industrialized setting is an irony. For Israel's rapid industrial development indeed was based on precisely the type of labor power that they provided: the governmental plan for industrial development for the years 1957–61 foresaw that out of the 45,300 new jobs to be created by the plan, 33,010 (73 percent) would be for unskilled workers.

The prototypical industry that was developed at the time was the textile industry, and by 1961, Orientals already were overrepresented among textile workers. Textile plants became a major factor in the life of the "development towns," whose populations are mostly Oriental. Many of those towns—such as Dimona, Kiryat Shemona, Beit She'an, Ofakim, or Afula—became "company towns." The textile plant is their major single provider of employment, and its ups and downs determine the fate of the majority of the population. A large section of the Orientals thus became an industrial proletariat. Their entrance into the industrial labor force was accompanied by a decrease of the cost of labor, relative to the cost of equipment, and by a widening gap between the high- and low-salary categories in industry.

On the other hand, industrial development provided new avenues of expansion and growth for industrial firms, most of which were owned and controlled by Ashkenazim. It also created new avenues of mobility for many Ashkenazim in management, marketing, banking, engineering and technical jobs, and in research.

HAVING BRIEFLY REVIEWED the developments in agriculture, construction, and industry, let us now take a quick look at the Israeli civil-service apparatus. While the Orientals were undergo-

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ing a process of proletarianization, large numbers of Ashkenazim were entering the public services, which underwent a great expansion concomitant with the rapid economic development. In 1961, 28.3 percent of employed foreign-born Ashkenazim and 37.3 percent of employed Israeli-born Ashkenazim worked in public services—in the bureaucracies, in education, and in the welfare services. In 1960, Ashkenazim constituted 80 percent of all civil servants; in some ministries, such as commerce and industry, foreign affairs, defense, education, and agriculture, the figure was 90 percent. Orientals were overrepresented in only one governmental branch, the police force, and there only in the lower ranks—for in 1960, only 35 of the 497 officers in the police force were Orientals.

The same held true for the state educational system, which expanded tremendously as a result of the massive influx of immigrants. The Oriental immigrants contributed disproportionately to this expansion, because of the large proportion of children among them at the time. Yet the increased demand for teachers was satisfied mainly by the recruitment of Ashkenazim, who throughout the 1950s constituted more than 90 percent of the teaching corps.

Israel's rapid economic development during the '50s and early '60s thus was characterized by a differential distribution of benefits among its various participants. As a result of the process, various categories were formed: first, a large governmental entrepreneurial-managerial apparatus; second, a stratum of industrialists, bankers, and other entrepreneurs who were the recipients of the investment capital procured by the government; third, a large stratum of engineers, technicians, and skilled workers; and finally, an even larger stratum of semiskilled and unskilled laborers. The first three categories consisted of Ashkenazim, both veteran settlers and new immigrants; Orientals, on the other hand, found themselves mainly in the last category. The Orientals filled the blue-collar and low-rank white-collar jobs throughout the economy, while the Ashkenazim governed, managed, commanded, and educated.

In order to understand today's implications of the process of the formation of this ethnic division of labor, we must note that it took place at the time when the Labor party was in undisputed political control of the country. We must add here, though, that none of the opposition parties—neither of the left nor of the right—provided a systematic critique of the process, or pressed for an alternative policy of development. They only endeavored—for many years unsuccessfully—to collect the fruits of Oriental discontent.

The picture presented so far is not, however, only a thing of the past. For the very processes that created the ethnic division of labor in the '50s and early '60s also created mechanisms of reproduction that have maintained that division of labor—obviously, with variations—to this day and are ensuring its continuation into the foreseeable future.

First, we should mention that housing in Israel is to a very large extent ethnically segregated. Ashkenazim and Orientals live in separate quarters, neighborhoods, towns, and farming communities. As mentioned earlier, the moshavim, the cooperative farm communities, are ethnically homogeneous. So are the development towns. In addition to these, there is a rather clear pattern of ethnic segregation in the large towns and cities: Ashkenazim live mainly in the northern and "better" neighborhoods, while Orientals are mainly concentrated in the southern ones. The 160 urban neighborhoods selected by the Begin government for the much publicized "Project [Urban] Renewal" are overwhelmingly Oriental.

Second, marriages are ethnically determined. Israeli politicians and social scientists alike tend to stress the rise in the proportion of interethnic marriages, from 9 percent in 1952 to about 20 percent at present. They also tend to hail that trend as a clear sign that "the ethnic problem is disappearing."[16] Few, however, point out that chances for a continued increase in that trend are slim, for, if one takes into account class positions and ecological segregation, the pool of candidates for probable interethnic marriages is quite limited.[17]

Furthermore, the ideological stress on the alleged significance of the rise in the proportion of marriages between Ashkenazim and Orientals has largely obscured the fact that a

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quantitatively more significant trend has been taking place at the same time: namely, a rise in the proportion of marriages between members of various Oriental groups (for instance, between Moroccans and Iraqis). In 1952, 70 percent of Oriental grooms married brides of their own country of origin, and 22 percent married brides of other Oriental countries of origin (8 percent married Ashkenazic brides), while in 1975 the figures were 42.4 percent and 40.7 percent (and 16.8 percent).[18] These figures indicate, among other things, that there is a clear trend in the direction of the formation of an "Oriental"—as distinct from Moroccan, Iraqi, etc.—community in Israel.

Third, the ethnic division of labor is reproduced by a system of education that is largely segregated and unequal. The segregation in schooling stems to a large degree, of course, from segregation in housing. The degree of segregation is such that in the early '70s the state initiated a program of ethnic integration in education, built on the model of the U.S. program for school integration and based, similarly, on busing. On top of that, the system itself is unequal: the schools in Ashkenazic neighborhoods have better facilities, better teachers, and higher status than those in Oriental neighborhoods.[19] On the high-school level, Oriental students constitute a majority in the vocational schools, while Ashkenazim study mainly in schools with an academic orientation.[20] At the universities, Orientals constitute less than 20 percent of the student body.[21]

Most important perhaps is the fact that most Oriental children study in elementary schools designated by the Ministry of Education as schools for the "*teunei tipuah*" ("culturally deprived"). These schools have specialized programs and many special teachers, and they are paraded as a sign of the government's great concern for the cultural upgrading of the Orientals, as a means of bringing about social equality. However, the entire system of schooling for the "*teunei tipuah*" is based on the a priori assumption that cultural differences can be equated with intellectual inequality. It functions as a huge labeling mechanism that has, among other things, the effect of lowering the achievement expectations of Oriental children and their parents.

Finally, and possibly most important, the ethnic division of labor is being reproduced by an ideological apparatus that presents the low social, political, and economic standing of the Orientals as a result not of the class nature of Israeli society but of the fact that they came from nonmodern and culturally backward societies. In other words, it puts the blame for the low position of the Orientals on the Orientals themselves. This ideology stems both from the general European feeling of superiority over the people of the Third World, which the Ashkenazim share, and from the sense of superiority acquired by the veteran Ashkenazim as the creators of the Zionist movement for Jewish political revival. This ideology has been elaborated by the Ashkenazic elite in Israel—from politicians and social scientists to educators and journalists. Thus Ben Gurion, speaking to the top command of the Israeli army in 1950, stated that

> many of these immigrants come to us without the most elementary knowledge, without a trace of Jewish or human [!] education. There are two reasons for this. First, they are the product of a period of destruction, a period of world wars, a period of material and spiritual deterioration caused by a shake-up in all human institutions. Second, they come from dark, oppressed, and exploited countries.[22]

This theme was picked up by Israeli social scientists, foremost among them S. N. Eisenstadt and his many students. Borrowing from the intellectual arsenal of the American functionalist studies of development and modernization, they provided the ideological apparatus with the aura of scientific respectability. Thus they claimed, in the words of one of them, that the Orientals have to undergo a process of "desocialization"—that is, erasure of their cultural heritage—and of "resocialization"—that is, acceptance of the Ashkenazic way of life.[23] Disregarding the clear signs that "resocialization" does not result in social equality, most Israeli social scientists (and most of them are Ashkenazim) continue to place their hopes for change in the process of "cultural upgrading" of the Orientals.[24]

This ideology permeates the schools for the "culturally deprived" Oriental children. It permeates the huge welfare apparatus, whose of-

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fices have become a ubiquitous presence in Oriental neighborhoods, and whose workers feel that they know best what is good for the Orientals. It permeates the military establishment, where many, like former Chief of Staff Mordechai Gur, feel that it is going to take years until Orientals can be entrusted with top military posts, because, given their "special" (that is, backward) mentality, they would not know how to operate a sophisticated Western organizational and technological machine.[25]

This ideology also permeates the mass media. A recent example, which created a great furor among Oriental public figures, was a series of two articles by Amnon Denkner, a well-known liberal columnist of the respectable daily *Ha'aretz*, likening, in the February 2, 1983 issue, the Oriental supporters of Begin to baboons whose cultural heritage compared poorly with that of the Ashkenazim, a heritage that includes "Heine, Freud, Einstein, and all that wonderful synthesis between Judaism and Western culture."

Finally, this ideology has permeated the ranks of the Orientals themselves, and many of them have come to believe that Ashkenazim are in fact intellectually superior and therefore merit their higher social positions. This is especially true for many of the Orientals who have entered the state apparatus—as politicians, educators, social workers, and community organizers—and who tend to talk about "them," that is, their Oriental constituents, in terms not unlike those used by Ashkenazim.

To sum up: residential segregation, the predominance of intragroup marriages, the segregated and unequal school system, and the ideological apparatus that portrays the Orientals as culturally deprived or backward—all work to reproduce the ethnic division of labor that emerged in Israel during the '50s and early '60s. Thus it is not surprising to find that inequality among second-generation Orientals and Ashkenazim—that is, among those born and raised in Israel—is even greater than it was among the immigrant generation. In 1981, one out of every two Israeli-born Ashkenazim had an academic, professional, or managerial job, as compared with one out of every six Israeli-born Orientals. In contrast, 34.7 percent of the Israeli-born Orientals are employed as blue-collar workers—as compared with only 14.0 percent of the Israeli-born Ashkenazim.[26]

The economic expansion after the Six-Day War brought with it an increased entrance of Orientals into white-collar occupations. They became bank tellers, secretaries, sales people and moved into service jobs, such as television and radio repair, became bus and taxi drivers, food-stand and boutique owners; they also entered the ranks of the expanded regular army, especially in N.C.O. positions. Yet to this day Orientals still constitute the bulk of Israel's Jewish blue-collar workers. At the same time, the Israeli-born Ashkenazim have entrenched themselves in the position of the governing, entrepreneurial, managerial, and commanding class.

How have the Orientals reacted? Of course, over the years, there have been protests, strikes, petitions, and demonstrations. Nevertheless, the first action on the part of Orientals to be interpreted and recognized as a collective protest by both Ashkenazim and the Orientals themselves was the reelection of Begin's coalition government in 1981. (His first triumph, in 1977, was thought by many to be a one-time accident.) The press called it "the rebellion of *Edot Ha'Misrach*" (Oriental communities).

Previous protest activities had been labeled as acts of particular groups with specific grievances:

- The Sephardim's slate in the first parliamentary elections had been dismissed as the particularistic representation of the old-time Sephardic elite of Jerusalem.
- Demonstrations by Orientals still in the transitory immigrant camps demanding "bread and jobs" had been dismissed as the agitational work of leftist Iraqi immigrants.
- The Wadi Salib riots in 1959 and the Black Panthers' demonstrations in the early '70s had been dismissed as the expression of "violence-prone" Moroccans.
- The election results of 1981, though, were fully recognized for what they were: a collective Oriental protest.

BUT WHY SO LATE? And why in the form of a vote for the Likud—a coalition of parties

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whose politicians are mostly middle-class Ashkenazic businessmen?

In order to find an answer to these questions, we must look at the development of the Zionist movement. On the face of it, Zionism entailed the transplantation of Jews from their European habitats to their independent state in Israel. But a second look reveals that what occurred was not a simple act of transplantation of Jewish communities as they had existed and operated in the Diaspora: the realization of Zionist goals entailed the creation of a new and complex organizational infrastructure that could recruit adherents, vie for support and control of Jewish communities; raise funds; train recruits for settlement in Palestine and transport them; support their economic undertakings, govern them, and defend them. In other words, in order to be realized, Zionism could not depend on the existing organizational infrastructure of the European Jewish communities; it had to create an entire state apparatus of its own.

Thus the World Zionist Organization, the Jewish National Fund, the various Zionist parties, the Halutz (Pioneer, agricultural labor) movement, the Jewish Agency, and the various military organizations came into being. This complex organizational network was responsible for the establishment of the Jewish community of Palestine, and after 1948 it became the skeleton of the independent Israeli state apparatus.

This Zionist organizational infrastructure, as we will recall, was almost entirely European—that is, Ashkenazic—and most of its efforts were oriented toward European Jews. It was built to absorb European Jews into the new society, even Jews who were not Zionists. Variations of this infrastructure are still at work in most Jewish communities in Western countries.

Oriental Jews did not develop anything of the sort, mainly because they had not experienced the same crisis of communal existence that the Europeans, especially the East European Jews, had experienced in the latter part of the 19th century. On the contrary: the occupation of most of the Middle East and North Africa by European imperialist powers opened new opportunities for Oriental Jews, whether in economic entrepreneurship, imperial administrative positions, or cultural and political activities. They had no need for a nationalist alternative and no reason to create an organizational infrastructure such as was created by the European Zionists.

Yet once the Zionist movement was created, many Oriental Jews joined it: they founded Zionist clubs, published Zionist newspapers, and contributed to the Zionist funds. They did so as members of an organization designed for European Jews; but in the early years, of course, this fact was not generally perceived as a problem, for Zionism spoke in the name of all Jews.[27]

Had life continued as before, the Palestinian Zionist leadership might have developed an operative framework to suit the needs and desires of the Oriental Jewish communities—which, they had come to realize, constituted a large reservoir of new immigrants. This might have entailed far-reaching changes in the traditional Zionist organizational patterns, or the creation of new structures guided and joined by members of the Oriental communities. However, life did not continue "as normal," for after 1948 these Jews had to evacuate hurriedly to Israel, where they entered a structure that was not suited to their needs and over which they had no control. In these new circumstances, they found it difficult to maintain even their traditional communal organizations: first, because they were dispersed throughout the country, and second, because their communal leaders themselves became dependent on the new authorities.

Bereft of their traditional communal organization, and lacking a new organizational infrastructure of their own, those Orientals who were dissatisfied with their new situation faced an extremely difficult task: the creation of an organization of their own in Israel—in their new national homeland.

WHY WAS THIS TASK SO DIFFICULT? It was difficult because it had to be done under very trying personal conditions—exhausting work, poor housing, and lack of acquaintance with the language and the country. It was difficult because there was at first no obvious need for an independent organization—because the Zion-

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ist infrastructure that the Ashkenazim had created contained not only the organizations that were now in control of the lives of the Oriental immigrants but also organizations that seemed, on the face of it, capable of expressing the grievances felt by dissatisfied Orientals. The Ashkenazic infrastructure could offer those Orientals who had labor grievances the services of the Histadrut, the powerful federation of labor unions. That infrastructure could offer those who harbored class resentments a variety of socialist and communist parties; it could offer those who sought refuge in traditional religious activity a plethora of Orthodox institutions. On top of that, all the major Israeli institutions hastened to open up new "departments for Orientals," and they competed fiercely for Oriental recruits.

Moreover—and most important—the Orientals in Israel found themselves in a situation unlike that of most minorities and ethnic groups. Such groups tend to organize, among other things, because they are denied access to part or parts of the societal universe. In Israel, in contrast, nobody denied that both Ashkenazim and Orientals belonged to one and the same national-societal universe, and Orientals were not openly denied access to any part of it. There was—and still is—"only" the problem of class inequality.

For a long time, Oriental activists thought that inequality could be fought through the existing, Ashkenazi-controlled, organizations representing working-class interests. Many of them, however, came to feel that the Histadrut and the parties of the left were an integral part of the ruling class, operating within an ideological framework that views Orientals as people in need of cultural upgrading. The alternative, then, was the formation of Oriental organizations. The problem is that the creation of any such organization implies—to Ashkenazim as well as to most Orientals—a denial of the universe to which both feel attached.

In a country founded as the homeland of the Jews, where the Holocaust is a living memory, and where the Jews are in constant conflict with the Arabs, the implication presents a very strong impediment. And the impediment has not remained implicit: it has been explicitly used by the Israeli elite in order to forestall and prevent anything that in Israeli parlance is called "ethnic organization." It has been used so effectively that any mention of the possibility of the creation of an "ethnic organization" instinctively evokes associations of "splitting up the nation."[28] Thus, at a gathering of top Oriental functionaries in the Labor party (called to voice their resentment at not receiving good slots on the party slate for the 1973 Knesset elections), many felt it necessary to state proudly that they had been instrumental in breaking up "ethnic parties."[29] In other words, the belief that an Oriental organization would present a threat to the unity of the national-societal universe has posed a very real dilemma for Oriental activists. So far, this belief has been quite effective in forestalling Oriental solidarity groups. (Lately, those activists who are freeing themselves from that bind have argued that most of the existing groupings, parties, and institutions in Israel are themselves "ethnic," since they are (joined and run mostly by Ashkenazim.)

IN ANALYZING THE OBSTACLES that stand in the way of creating an Oriental organizational infrastructure in Israel, I have proceeded on the assumption that such an infrastructure is the desired goal of a significant number of Orientals. This, however, is not necessarily the case. For many years the advocates of Oriental organization were few and far between. Only lately, a feeling that independent action is a necessary step for social change has begun to spread among young activists and intellectuals. Most Orientals did not, and still do not, think that their problems stem from the fact that a class division along ethnic lines has emerged in Israel. Therefore they do not see the need for any organizational effort based on their own class interests. Rather, they have believed, and still believe—in accordance with the dominant Israeli ideology—that their problems can be treated effectively through intervention by the state's social welfare apparatus. More and better housing, improved educational facilities, support for families with many children, superior vocational training, and generous support for the needy are perceived as measures that could "close the gap" between Orientals and Ashkenazim. ("The social gap" is the euphe-

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mism used in Israel to refer to the ethnic division of labor.)

In fact, demands for improved and expanded welfare measures have made up the major part of the platforms of most Oriental slates in elections to the Knesset. The most recent example was provided by Tami, a party formed by Orientals who split from the National Religious party. It gained the support of many young activists who saw in it a means of expressing an independent Oriental consciousness. After a year and a half of very passive participation in the Begin cabinet (Tami obtained three Knesset seats in the 1981 elections and was assigned one cabinet post in the governing coalition), the party's leaders threatened to walk out of the coalition if the government failed to pass a law providing special financial benefits to families with many children. The government accommodated them—and Tami returned to its political and social passivity.

The problem with a social welfare platform, of course, is that anything an Oriental organization can do in this area, the major Ashkenazi-controlled parties can do much better. In its 29 years in government, the Labor party was able to use its power to raise the ante on any and every demand of Oriental militants.

Thus, for example, in 1959, at the time of the riots in the Wadi Salib neighborhood of Haifa, Ben Gurion's government offered Wadi residents much coveted employment at the Haifa port, and at the same time proclaimed a plan for resettling them in better housing. (To assure the success of this strategy, the leaders of the riots were jailed.) In 1971, when Oriental militants calling themselves "Black Panthers" organized mass demonstrations in Jerusalem, Golda Meir's government established an inquiry committee to study the situation of poor children and promised to fund any measures advocated by the committee. (At the same time, the Panther leaders were harassed by the police.)

THE LIKUD PARTY, of course, then had much less to offer, for it was in the opposition—but it made promises in the same vein during all its election campaigns. And as soon as it ascended to power, it proceeded to proclaim, with great fanfare, "Project Renewal," a project designed to improve housing conditions in 160 predominantly Oriental neighborhoods. So far, it has performed mostly cosmetic changes, and not in all the neighborhoods slated for renewal.

In addition to direct social-welfare measures, the Ashkenazi-controlled parties could easily compete with upstart Oriental organizations in another, and possibly more important, field: they could offer activists and militants personal mobility and political careers, with the added prospect of "changing the system from within." In this way, the Labor party has managed to co-opt a wide stratum of communal leaders, union militants, neighborhood organizers, and intellectuals who might have formed the basis for alternative organizations.

Before it rose to power, the Likud, for its part, recruited those activists who had been rejected by the Labor party, or who had found the rise within the Labor hierarchy too slow. Thus David Levy, the most prominent Oriental member of Begin's cabinet, and Meir Shitrit, the most prominent figure among the Likud's Oriental members of the Knesset, both rose rapidly in the ranks of the pre-1977 major opposition party, after having first tried their luck in the Labor party.

In this context, Begin's popularity among Oriental voters can be understood. In a situation where the formation of independent Oriental organizations is extremely difficult, for both structural and ideological reasons, and where those that do form are overwhelmed by a combination of lavish social-welfare measures, co-optation of their leaders, and harassment of the recalcitrant in their midst, a vote for the party that represents opposition interests within the ruling class becomes a major avenue of collective expression. The fact that so many within the Israeli establishment, and especially among the liberal-to-left intelligentsia, attribute this vote to social-psychological factors —such as the Orientals' alleged "hate for the Arabs" or their alleged "traditionalistic predilection for charismatic leadership"—is a measure both of their continued adherence to the ideology of "cultural backwardness," and of their refusal to recognize that under the long

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leadership of Labor there developed in Israel a clear and rather rigid class structure that is divided along ethnic lines.

At this point, I would like to make a brief diversion in order to discuss the alleged connection between the Orientals' "cultural background" and their massive support for Begin in the last elections, as this connection is made uncritically by most Israeli and foreign commentators. Is there a connection between the "partriarchical" and/or "authoritarian elements" in the Orientals' "cultural background" and their support for the right-wing, conservative, and idolatrized Begin? As this subject merits a detailed analysis of its own, I will here limit myself only to a few remarks.

First, those who present this question tend to make an implicit distinction between the political culture of East European and Middle Eastern Jews, placing the former in the "Western democratic" camp, and the latter in the "Non-Western authoritarian" camp. But such a distinction does not hold: Ashkenazim who look down on the masses chanting "Begin! Begin!" in the town squares tend to forget their own recent past: after all, it was in Vilna, the "Jerusalem of Lithuania," that, on the occasion of Herzl's visit, "a dark mass, seething with excitement, crowded the narrow streets," and "surged forth desperately with cries of 'Herzl, Herzl!' and 'Long live the King!' "[30]

Second, and more important, it is extremely difficult to discuss the effects of a collectivity's "cultural background" under circumstances where that collectivity has lost effective control over its day-to-day affairs and is no longer carrying out a self-designed and self-managed societal project. Under such circumstances one can make reasonable statements mostly about the "cultural background" of the actions of the dominant group—for the dominated one is, in the main, only reacting to options designed for it by the former. Let me illustrate this point. If it were not for the fact that as a consequence of the 1948 War of Independence Israel's borders with its Arab neighbors remained closed, and for the fact that the Israeli economy in the early 1950s was highly centralized and thoroughly planned, many Oriental immigrants would have been able to take advantage of their "cultural background" and enter the field of trade with the Arabs—a field for which their past history gave them many advantages over their Ashkenazic brethren. As it was, however, they became an industrial and white-collar proletariat. And nobody, to my knowledge, has as yet contended that the Orientals' proletarianization represents an expression of direct continuity with their "cultural background"! In the same vein, we ought to remember that Begin is not the product of an autonomous and independent Oriental political movement—but rather an option presented to Orientals by a party structure controlled by Ashkenazim.

Third, those who attribute the Oriental vote for Begin to their "authoritarian cultural background" tend to forget that up to the late 1960s and early '70s, the Orientals voted en masse for the liberal-socialist Labor party. (And nobody sought an explanation for *that* in their "cultural background.") Now it is true that Ben Gurion, the leader of the Labor party for many years, was himself a "father figure"; but then, not only Orientals voted for him; so did most of the Ashkenazim.

Fourth, we are living in an age of "managed" politics. The public image of a party or of a candidate is to a large extent the product of a carefully designed public-relations campaign, and mass rallies are the product of a well-run campaign organization. Consequently, "cultural background" can be the result of a promotion effort designed to fit the needs of the party that pays the bill. In the early 1950s, the Labor party distributed in Yemenite communities leaflets hinting that Ben Gurion was the Messiah—despite the fact that such an idea is offensive to believers. In the same vein, Begin's campaign managers carefully designed slogans that would appeal to the "lowest common denominator," disregarding the fact that the tactic constituted an insult to the intelligence of many voters. In both cases, campaign managers created public images of their employers that *they* thought reflected the Orientals' cultural background.

Finally, it should be remembered that Begin's support comes not only from "authoritarian" Orientals but also from "democratic and rational" Ashkenazim: polls taken in June 1981 (at the time of the last elections) showed that among supporters of the two largest par-

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ties, 36 percent of foreign-born Ashkenazim and 45 percent of Israeli-born Ashkenazim also opted for the Likud.[31] Which means that the campaign must have appealed not only to Oriental voters.

THE VOTE FOR THE LIKUD, then, has very little to do with the Orientals' "cultural background"—and it has quite a lot to do with their present position in the Israeli social structure. Independent Oriental activists know this. David Hammou, for example, has called the Likud "an overnight shelter" where Orientals find temporary refuge until they are able to form their own channels of expression (*Ha'aretz*, October 14, 1981). And Asher Idan has written that the Orientals strengthened the hyena—the Likud—only in order to weaken the bear—the Labor party.[32]

The Orientals' vote for Begin was their first clearly identifiable collective move. It would be meaningless to speculate on future developments, since new options have only now begun to open up. What should be said, however, is that those individuals in the West who have a genuine interest in the future of the Middle East would be wrong to regard the Oriental Jews simply as an impediment to peace—while impatiently awaiting Israel's return to a saner course of policy. The Orientals may be providing, in the present conjuncture, electoral support for the militaristic right wing of the Ashkenazic ruling class in Israel, but they do so for reasons of their own, as a dominated and manipulated collectivity within Israeli society. In other words, at issue here is not only the national policy of Israel, but also the nature of its social structure.

Notes

[1] S.D. Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967), vol. 1, p. 65. Also M. Lombard, *The Golden Age of Islam* (Amsterdam: North Holland, 1975), pp. 204–12. English.

[2] B.D. Weinryb, *The Jews of Poland: A Social and Economic History of the Jews of Poland from 1100 to 1800* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1972), pp. 115–16.

[3] S. Ettinger, "Modern Times," in *The History of the Jewish People*, H. H. Ben-Sasson, ed. (Tel Aviv: Dvir, 1969), vol. 3, p. 76. Hebrew.

[4] Israel Central Bureau of Statistics, *Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1982* (Jerusalem, 1983), p. 60.

[5] M. Sicron, *The Immigration to Israel 1948–1953* (Jerusalem: Falk Institute and Israeli Bureau of Statistics, 1957), Table 8. Hebrew.

[6] H. Cohen, *Zionist Activities in the Countries of the Middle East* (Jerusalem: World Zionist Organization, 1978), p. 52. Hebrew.

[7] Israel Central Bureau of Statistics, *Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1978* (Jerusalem, 1979), p. 137.

[8] For a comparative study of Moroccan brothers who went to France and to Israel, see M. Inbar and C. Adler, *Ethnic Integration in Israel* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Books, 1977).

[9] D. Bernstein, "The Immigrant Camps in the 1950s," *Mahbarot Le'Mehkar U'Lebikoret*, November 1980. Hebrew. Also S. Swirski, *Orientals and Ashkenazim in Israel: The Ethnic Division of Labor* (Haifa: Mahbarot Le'Mehkar U'Lebikoret, 1981), chap. 2. Hebrew.

[10] Swirski, *Orientals and Ashkenazim . . .*, p. 59.

[11] N. Halevi and R. Klinov-Malul, *The Economic Development of Israel* (Jerusalem: Akademon, 1968), p. 26. Hebrew.

[12] See, for example, S. Balas, *The Immigrant Camp* (Tel Aviv: Am Oved, 1964); L. Hakak, *The Foundlings* (Tel Aviv: Tamuz, 1977); S. Michael, *Some Are More Equal Than Others* (Tel Aviv: Boostan, 1974). All Hebrew.

[13] Amos Oz, *Under the Blazing Light* (Tel Aviv: Sifriat Po'alim, 1979), p. 128. Hebrew.

[14] D. Bernstein and S. Swirski, "The Rapid Economic Development of Israel and the Emergence of the Ethnic Division of Labour," *British Journal of Sociology*, March 1982 (vol. 33, no. 1).

[15] All figures in the following account are taken from Bernstein and Swirski, "The Rapid Economic Development . . .," unless otherwise stated. For a fuller account, see Swirski, *Orientals and Ashkenazim . . .*, chap. 2.

[16] For a critique of such an interpretation, see S. Swirski, *University, State, and Society in Israel: A Study of the Social and Political Consciousness of Israeli Students* (Jerusalem: Mifras, 1982), chap. 4. Hebrew.

[17] Y. Peres, *Ethnic Relations in Israel* (Tel Aviv: Sifriat Po'alim, 1976), chap. 6. Hebrew.

[18] Swirski, *Orientals and Ashkenazim . . .*, p. 70.

[19] For a unique study of the school system in one Oriental community, see A. Lewis, *Power, Poverty, and Education* (Ramat Gan, Israel: Turtledove, 1979). English.

[20] *Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1982*, p. 633.

[21] Ibid., p. 649.

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[22] D. Ben Gurion, *Eternal Israel* (Tel Aviv: Ayanot, 1964), p. 34. Hebrew, my translation.

[23] R. Bar Yosef, "Desocialization and Resocialization: The Process of Immigrants' Adaptation," in *Immigrants in Israel*, M. Lissak, B. Mizrachi, and O. Ben-David, eds. (Jerusalem: Akademon, 1969). Hebrew.

[24] For a critique by an Oriental sociologist, see S. Smooha, *Israel: Pluralism and Conflict* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1978).

[25] *Al Ha'Mishmar*, May 10, 1978.

[26] *Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1982*, p. 348.

[27] For a personal account of one who foresaw the possibility of problems, see E. Eliachar, *Living with Jews* (Jerusalem: Marcus 1980). Hebrew.

[28] For Oriental expressions in this vein, see Swirski, *Orientals and Ashkenazim*. . . .

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[30] A. Elon, *Herzl* (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1975), p. 383.

[31] M. Shamir and A. Arian, "Ethnic Voting in the 1981 Elections," *Medina, Memshal, Ve'Yechasim Benle'umim*, Spring 1982. Hebrew.

[32] A. Idan, "War and Equality," in *On War and Equality* (Haifa: Yated, 1982). Hebrew. □

The Lebanese War–Looking Back

An Interview with Dan Horowitz

In June 1983 I held a long conversation with Dan Horowitz, who teaches in the Political Science department of the Hebrew University. He is active in the Israeli Labor party and a well-known commentator on Israeli politics. Since I am an indifferent interviewer and he is a wonderful talker, I have in this transcript simply let him talk and cut out my own interventions. — MICHAEL WALZER

There are three major differences between the Lebanese War and previous Israeli wars (with the possible exception of the Sinai campaign of 1956). The first is that the Lebanese War didn't focus on the interstate conflict between Israel and the Arab countries. It was a kind of revival of the old prestatehood, intercommunal conflict between Israelis and Palestinians—the conflict over what Israelis call "the Land of Israel."

Ben Gurion's main contribution to Israeli political discourse was to get us to think in state terms rather than communal terms. This was possible because of the partition of Palestine, and because most of the Arabs who had lived in the territory that became Israel either left or were driven out of this territory. Israel became an approximate nation-state with a rather small Arab minority. Thus the partition and the demographic results of the 1948 conflict transformed the intercommunal conflict into an interstate conflict.

This transformation was associated with a certain concept of security, which distinguished between basic security and immediate or current security. Basic security has to do with the Arab countries' threat to destroy the state of Israel altogether, using the military power of the Arab world. Current security has to do with terrorism, border clashes, all kinds of small problems mainly associated with the Palestinians' attempts to make life difficult in

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Israel, to undermine morale, and so on. This sort of violence was not a threat to Israel's existence—not an existential threat, but a threat to the welfare of the population—assuming that a degree of security is a matter of public welfare.

Until after the 1967 War everyone agreed that basic security should be the main concern of Israel, of the army, of defense thinking. But by occupying territory where a large part of the Palestinians live, Israel introduced into the area under its control the old intercommunal issue; communal conflict again became a problem. As long as the Labor party was in power, the emphasis was still on the interstate conflict because Israel still hoped for a territorial solution to the problem of the Palestinians. The left wing thought about a return to the pre-'67 borders; the Labor party as a whole adopted the formula of territorial compromise, which meant a repartition of the West Bank that would leave most of the Arab population outside the territory of Israel. There's no difference in principle: so long as a border exists between two states and between the majority of the Palestinians and the people of Israel, the communal problem would be transformed, again, into a relation between states. Israel again would be essentially a Jewish nation-state with an Arab minority. Therefore the emphasis in the security field was still on the defense of Israel against a major Arab attack.

When Begin came to power in 1977, there was no immediate change in strategic concepts. He tried to adopt a more moderate approach than his party's official line, and he brought into his cabinet such people as Dayan, Yadin, Weizmann, who all were associated with the old tradition. The real change took place only after the '81 elections. First, there was a change in the composition of the government. New people were appointed to key positions: Shamir as foreign minister, Sharon as defense minister—and both were strongly associated with the ideology of Greater Israel. To think in terms of Greater Israel meant that there would be no repartition of Palestine, no return of most of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip to Arab sovereignty, and hence a much greater emphasis than before on the Palestinian issue. A parallel change had taken place even earlier on the Arab side. The result was that security problems became much more difficult, especially in the Galilee, because of the buildup of a PLO military infrastructure in southern Lebanon.

Consequently the Lebanese War became the first war that was focused on the Palestinians and not on the threat from Arab states. This new focus affected the military planning of the operation, for the Israeli army put more emphasis on the western sector where the Palestinians were fighting than on the eastern sector where the Syrian forces were deployed. And, mainly for internal political reasons (with which I shall deal later), Israel did not start the war with the Syrians on the first day but waited until the second or third day, even though it was apparently assumed in advance that there would be a confrontation with the Syrians. The main thrust of the army was in the west, not in the east. Thus the Israeli army succeeded in reaching the Beirut-Damascus road, which was Sharon's main target, on the western front, but it failed to do so on the eastern front. This was a result of the order of priorities: first to destroy not only the military infrastructure of the Palestinians in the south of Lebanon but also their political center in Beirut. It was a sharp departure from the traditional doctrine that had led the Israeli army in previous wars to deal first with the militarily strongest opponents. This was the first change.

The second change was made from a strategically defensive and operationally offensive doctrine to a strategically offensive doctrine that remained operationally offensive as well—a spillover from the tactical level onto the strategic level. The reasons for the spillover were not military but political, having to do with the ideological concept of a Greater Israel and the return of the communal conflict.

What I mean by a strategically offensive doctrine is the initiation of military operations that aim at changing the status quo in the Arab-Israeli conflict. Since at least '56, Israel's strategy was basically defensive. Operationally it had to be offensive for military reasons: the need to end the fighting in a short time, the advantages of attack over defense, the need to

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carry the war into the enemy's territory, particularly with the vulnerable pre-'67 borders. For these and other reasons, even political doves were often military hawks. For within the pre-'67 borders, Israel did not have the capacity to absorb an attack and could not secure a decisive victory, or even a limited military success that would prevent the enemy from achieving his political goals, without striking first. Still, Israel did not go to war for the purpose of changing the status quo. The idea was that Israel would only go to war when it was threatened and when the threat was acute and immediate—as it was in '67.

The rationale for this approach involved several considerations. First, the cost of wars. Israelis invest more in their security than any other country in the world—not only financially (the military budget is about 30 percent of the gross national product) but also in length of military service, with people serving first as conscripts, for three years, and later as reservists, for almost a month each year (adding up to another two to three years). Altogether, that means six to seven years. This burden alone is sufficient reason to avoid war whenever possible; whenever, that is, the war isn't vital to Israel's basic existential situation. In this way, Israel may reduce the number of wars its army has to fight and the extra burden resulting from such wars.

Moreover—and this wasn't understood by everyone, certainly not by Begin—there is no proof that Israeli victories deter the enemy from attacking and that military successes postpone the next confrontation. The shortest respite between Israeli wars came after the '67 war, the most decisive victory Israel ever had. Two years after this victory, Egypt started the war of attrition and four years later, the Egyptians and the Syrians started the Yom Kippur War. This contradicts the common belief that victories deter. Indeed, wars initiated by Israel are additional wars and not a substitute for wars started by the Arabs.

Thus Begin was entirely wrong when he defended the Lebanese War on grounds that "wars of choice spare [us] wars of no choice." Wars of choice are only added to wars of no choice. The extra burden of wars in human and material resources is thus a strong argument in favor of adopting a defensive strategic doctrine.

Another argument for the defensive approach of the past was that the Arab-Israeli conflict cannot be decided through military means. Israel cannot win wars decisively; it can hope for only a limited success that ends the hostilities without allowing the enemy any political gains. Sometimes, perhaps, wars may bring marginal political gains for Israel, but Israel can't bring about the capitulation of the Arabs because of the size and population of the Arab world and the likely intervention of world powers. In terms of Israeli objectives, all Israeli-Arab wars are thus limited wars; there is no rationale for fighting to change the status quo because the most that could be achieved would be a tactical change while the costs would be high and the balance of costs and benefits doubtful.

What Israel can gain is mainly the destruction of the enemy's equipment. Some thousands of enemy soldiers may be killed—but without significantly reducing the size of the Arab armies. Armament and other equipment can be destroyed; but for what purpose? We destroy equipment, and we lose some ourselves when the Arab capacity to renew stocks is much better than ours, for both financial and political reasons. Even if the ratio of destruction is much in favor of Israel, and this is usually the case, the rate of replacement clearly favors the Arabs. So, again, there is no rationale for initiating a war.

Thus Israel's wars were limited, and Israel has always preferred to use its army as a deterrent; we preferred the threat of violence to the exercise of violence. And when the Israeli army did fight, an effort was made to control the process of escalation. In recent years, the Arabs too have adopted a more limited strategic concept as they became convinced that Israel could not be totally destroyed—first, because of the strength of the Israeli army; second, because the superpowers, especially the United States, won't allow it; and third, because of the Arabs' belief that Israel has a nuclear capability.

The basic doctrine, then, was strategically defensive and operationally offensive. There were always problems in avoiding contradic-

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tions between these two levels, in accommodating the operational concept to the strategic concept. How do you know that deterrence has failed and that it is time for putting your operational capacity into action?

Before the '67 War, Israel developed the concept of the *casus belli* as a way of answering this question. A blockade of the straits of Tiran, for example, is a sign that deterrence has failed and thus a *casus belli*. Some ambiguity regarding the circumstances in which the doctrine would be implemented was, of course, unavoidable, but the basic strategy was clear: Israel would go to war only when it was threatened, when it felt it was in a position of basic or immediate vulnerability. Thus even when Israel struck first, war was forced upon the country, not chosen by it.

According to the new strategic concept of Begin, Sharon, and ex-Chief of Staff Eitan, Israel should go to war precisely under the opposite conditions—when it is strong. The exploitation of opportunities thus becomes the guiding strategic idea.

This idea, if fully implemented, would make Israel a destabilizing factor in the Middle East—because when threatened, it would have to fight wars of no choice, and when not threatened but strong, it would initiate wars of choice. This change, though publicly advocated by Begin, was never formally adopted. It came about mainly because of the personal influence of a few people, particularly Sharon and Eitan. Begin too expressed his preference for wars of choice. Yet the new strategic concept remained ambiguous except as a justification for the war in Lebanon; it was not a concept easy to sell to the Israeli public and was presented only at the moment when the war seemed successful. This was the reason for all the deceptions during the war. Begin and Sharon didn't emphasize, in the beginning, their primary objective—which was to destroy the Palestinian political center in Beirut so as to strengthen their control of the West Bank. They preferred to refer to the security problem in the Galilee, with its defensive connotation, and to present the war's extension as a consequence of developments within the war itself.

This attempt to deceive—some people say to deceive even the cabinet, certainly to deceive the people, to deceive the opposition, to deceive the United States, to deceive world public opinion—this attempt had a negative effect on the planning of the war. From a strictly military point of view, much more could have been achieved, and at much less cost, if from the beginning Israel had attacked the Syrians with all its force and taken them by surprise. But the government needed to present the war as a more limited operation than it really was; it could not admit, at the first stage at least, the adoption of the new strategic doctrine.

The third change associated with the war in Lebanon was a social and political one: the readiness of the government to start a war without securing a national consensus. There was little understanding of the broader war objectives in the country and no consensus on the extent of the war. The opposition, which represents almost half the country, was against any advance beyond a 40-kilometer limit, in accordance with the idea of removing PLO artillery from within firing range of Israel's borders. Apparently, about 10 or 15 percent of the population opposed the war altogether. And the Israeli army was sensitive to the lack of consensus, more than other armies would be: it is a matter of social structure.

The Israeli elites are overrepresented in the crack units of the army, in the paratroops, the commando units, the air force, and so on. And the more peripheral groups in Israeli society are underrepresented—not only in the officers' corps (that's probably true everywhere), but also in the fighting units. In this respect, it's not like most other armies, where you find better-educated people in noncombatant roles, while in the fighting units you find mostly the less educated and lower-income groups. In Israel it is the other way around. And the Israeli elites are more associated with the Labor party, while the lower-income and less educated strata are more inclined to support the Begin government—and therefore to support the war. So the opposition to the war came from social groups on which the army relies for much of its fighting strength, and this made the problem of consensus even more serious. Of course, from a democratic point of view, there is nothing

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wrong in starting a war that is supported by a majority, even if it is a narrow majority. The problem isn't the legitimacy of the government's decision, in the light of law or the principles of political theory, but the *wisdom* of the decision, socially and politically. The problem is whether it doesn't undermine the basic trust of large segments of the people and weaken their will to fight. No government in Israel before that of Begin was willing to run the risk that Israel's capacity to conduct a war would be impaired in the long run as a result of a decline in national consensus.

But this consideration was ignored by Sharon and Eitan. Perhaps not entirely ignored, as their need to deceive indicates. However, they obviously believed that the war would be successful and that success would restore the consensus within the country. In planning the war, their assumptions were not based on worst-case analyses but rather on best-case analyses. They expected a very rapid and decisive success, at a very low cost. And under such conditions, opposition to the war would never become a major factor; a victorious war wins acceptance even from people who initially had hesitations. The problem of consensus came to the surface mainly as a result of the limited success of the war.

Now let me say something about that limited success. How does the war look a year after it was begun? First of all, it is wrong to measure the outcome of a war only by comparing its results with its objectives. It is also necessary to consider the war's indirect and unanticipated costs. In the case of the war in Lebanon these include: the strengthening of Syria; the undermining of Israeli morale; the relatively high rate of casualties; the negative image of Israel that was created abroad, and so on. These too are part of the calculation of the war's costs and benefits.

The benefits are very small. There was the destruction of the political center of the PLO in Beirut; the PLO lost some of its prestige and became more dependent on Syria. Whether that dependency is good or bad, I don't know. The artillery was removed from South Lebanon; the Palestinians can still carry out terrorist activities or wage guerrilla warfare, but they have no significant paramilitary infrastructure. They now are less dangerous than they were before the war to the people who live in Kiryat Shimona; "no *katushas* are falling on Kiryat Shimona," as Begin would say. These are the achievements, and they are very limited.

The costs are enormous. The assumption was that there would be fewer than 100 soldiers killed; there are now 500 dead and well over 2,000 wounded. The assumption was that the campaign would take four to five days; it has continued now for more than a year. The burden on the reserves has increased considerably, and people are serving 60 days and more a year instead of 30 days. The army cannot train because most of the military units and some of the armor units of the regular army are engaged in Lebanon. The army cannot reorganize. Meanwhile, the Syrians, with Russian help, have greatly increased their strength. There is also a heavy economic cost. And there is, of course, a cost to the image of Israel abroad. Inside the country, there is political polarization—the result of fighting without a consensus. All these costs overshadow the limited benefits.

When the government's spokesmen talk about the war, they ask, "What were the objectives? What was achieved and what was not achieved?" And they tend to say, "Peace with Lebanon was not achieved but there was a limited agreement; there is no authoritative Lebanese government, but there is a new president who is closer to Israel; and there are no *katushas* falling on Kiryat Shimona. . . . " You can make this kind of argument so long as you don't take into account all the direct and indirect unanticipated costs.

The costs are the result of incomprehensible mistakes—naïve assumptions and illusions. For example: the assumption that once you expose the weaknesses of the Syrians and the limitations of Soviet arms, the Soviet and Syrian reaction would be to go along—as if the Soviets were to say: "Well, we have to be realistic and accept the fact that our weapons are ineffective," and as if the Syrians would now seek a compromise, look for new connections in the West to replace the Soviet link. It would have been much more rational to assume that the

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Russians, who in the past didn't provide the Syrians with the best equipment they have, now would try to supply them with better systems (as indeed has happened). And that the Syrians would accept the better systems and agree to an increased Soviet intervention in their affairs as part of the price for the reequipping of their forces. Thus it would have been reasonable to assume that in the end there will be a new arms race that will force Israel to invest more in its weapons systems.

Another example: *how could anyone not understand that there is a difference between capturing South Lebanon and holding it?* How could anyone ignore the fact that control of Lebanon would be a serious problem for a country with an army composed mostly of reserves? Perhaps Begin and Sharon had illusions about the capacity of the Christian militia, the Phalange, to impose its will on the whole population of Lebanon—a multicommunity population, with Druse and Shi'ite Moslems, with Sunni Moslems and different kinds of Christian denominations, and all of them Arabs. But to believe that the Gemayel family, using the few thousand ill-trained and not fully equipped soldiers of the Lebanese army together with some few thousand paramilitary fighters, could enforce law and order in that country, remain friendly to Israel, and cut their relations with the Arab world—this requires a degree of naïveté that is incomprehensible. I can't understand it.

For all these reasons, the war is a failure from which Israel will suffer, not for a few years, but for many, many years. It will increase the security burden, the economic burden, the lack of consensus. Therefore, though the human and material losses, and the political losses, were perhaps less than those in the Yom Kippur War, the long-range consequences will, I think, be much more severe. And the Yom Kippur War was undoubtedly "a war of no choice". . . . □

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Roy Medvedev

Andropov and the Dissidents

The Internal Atmosphere under the New Soviet Leadership

The well-known Russian historian and political dissident Roy Medvedev has a long and distinguished career as a student of contemporary Soviet affairs. Shortly after the accession of Yuri Andropov to the Soviet leadership, the secret police gave Medvedev a "stern warning" against expressing his political views in print. — Eds.

The changes in the Soviet leadership have been of great interest not only because they represent shifts of emphasis in the U.S.S.R.'s foreign and domestic policies. Considerable attention has also been focused on the relations between the authorities and the various opposition movements.

In our country, changes at the top always bear with them a great many hopes and misgivings. The Brezhnev era with its slogan of "stability," its prevailing bureaucratic style, and its enshrinement of mediocrity was not particularly rich in striking events. The dissident movement that began in the mid-1960s may well have been one of the most important events in the country's internal life even though the official press and histories will long pass over it in silence or distort its basic causes and character.

It would not be hard to demonstrate that the U.S.S.R. has always known opposition in one form or another. The ideological and political basis of internal opposition has always been greatly varied, ranging from counterrevolutionary monarchistic and bourgeois trends to left-liberal and left-socialist trends. Stalin's horrendous terror in the '30s and '40s is in no way to be explained by the actions of these relatively small groups. That terror was directed against entire classes, even against whole separate nationalities. However, Stalin's punitive machine did at times direct its blows against opposition groups it uncovered and that did in fact exist. During the Khrushchev years too, small opposition groups with a variety of programs sprang up.

The dissident movement of the 1960s was, however, a new phenomenon, which is why it exerted a special influence on the atmosphere in our society. Until the mid-'60s, nearly all opposition groups were illegal and underground. Andrei Sinyavsky (Abram Tertz) and Yuli Daniel (Nikolai Arzhak) began their activities in the utmost secrecy. But the protests that stemmed from the arrest and trial of Sinyavsky and Daniel, and from subsequent political trials, were neither illegal nor clandestine. The same holds true for the dissidence to be found in the literature of that period, primarily connected with the name of Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn but also linked to the writings and statements of General Grigorenko, Gleb Yakunin's and D. Dudko's religious opposition, Academician Sakharov's early writings, and those of a great many others. These were open, legal statements. Or, rather, the dissidents strove for the status of a legal movement. They operated in full view of the authorities and therein lay their vulnerability. On the other hand, they appealed openly to public opinion at home and were seen and supported by foreign public opinion and the foreign press whose

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statements were, like a magnified echo, heard in many corners of our land. "*Samizdat*," which was born of this opposition movement, was far from being a clandestine or underground phenomenon—it was one of the forms of unofficial and uncensored publication possible at the time.

The dissident movement of the '60s and '70s was not, of course, either a mass or a nationwide movement; those who took part in it belonged primarily to the intelligentsia. And if we are speaking of the active members of the oppositional tendencies in Moscow and in the provinces, there were only some few thousand of them, which is not a large figure in the Soviet scheme of things. But the movement found a response in a much larger group of the intelligentsia and even of blue- and white-collar workers, and it influenced the way they thought and related to the world around them. Thus the party's monopoly on ideology had been broken—which is the principal reason for the campaign Brezhnev launched against all forms of dissidence.

One of the more important features of the opposition movement of the '60s and '70s was that it attracted not only young people but many others who had achieved renown in our society: leading scientists, writers, actors, musicians, artists, old Bolsheviks and the children of well-known political figures of the past, popular journalists, and even a Soviet general. The fact that such people were directly involved in the movement made it extremely difficult for the authorities to crush it. Every "operation" against such people as Sakharov, Solzhenitsyn, Grigorenko, Neizvestny, Zinoviev, Voinovich, Vladimov, Rostropovich, Chukovskaya, Litvinov, and many others demanded a great deal of the authorities' time and energy and required decisions on the highest level.

It is not my intention here to trace the history of the opposition movement in the U.S.S.R. as it went through several ups and downs over a period of 18 years—a movement extremely heterogeneous in its aims, content, form, and methods. The forms and methods employed by the authorities to crush it were not uniform either. Those efforts, ultimately, have been almost entirely successful. By November 1982 we could observe a near-total cessation of what had recently been known as the democratic movement. Some of the dissidents are in prison, or being held for investigation in "corrective labor" camps, or in internal exile. A still larger percentage of the well-known dissidents are now living abroad. And a still greater number of the rank and file have curtailed their activities out of weariness and disillusionment or as a result of pressure and persecution.

In the years 1980–82 the authorities had stepped up their pressure not only on the dissidents but on society as a whole. The democratic movement has ceased to be replenished by well-known members of the Soviet intelligentsia, its passive support and its influence on society have diminished, and *samizdat* has come to a near-complete halt. The connections between various emigré groups and their friends in the U.S.S.R. have also shown a significant decline. Fewer and fewer Russian books published by emigré authors are making their way into the Soviet Union. All the well-known groups that promote organized opposition, including the Helsinki Group and Amnesty, have in essence ceased to function. The number of people who continue to speak and work openly in directions the authorities find objectionable has been reduced to a few dozen.

Some of those with an oppositionist cast of mind, chiefly the young, have attempted to protect themselves by crossing over into illegal forms of activity. But this is an extremely difficult task when an authoritarian government has the powerful KGB at its disposal. In spring 1983 a few such groups were uncovered and their leaders arrested.

The "victory" of the mighty state machine over the uncoordinated groups of dissidents will do absolutely nothing to foster socialist democracy in our country. It will not help revive the life of our society or create independent social instincts in people, all extremely important for a socialist society; nor will it increase society's control over the agencies of the state. The opposition, of course, often disturbed the peace of the powers-that-be, but it has been of vital importance in trying to restore our society to health.

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The changes in the party's leadership had given rise to some hopes in dissident circles, hopes shared by a part of the creative intelligentsia who had been counting on the new leaders to display a certain liberalism. The fact that Andropov had been the head of the KGB for many years, that Aliev, a new member of the Politburo, had emerged from the ranks of the KGB, and that our new Minister of Internal Affairs Fedorchuk had been well known in the Ukraine for his stern measures against Ukrainian dissidents did not in itself dispel those hopes. Surely the KGB, which Andropov had headed from 1967 to 1982, could not boast of enjoying any special affection among Soviet citizens. The enormous efforts made over the last 15 years by the press, film, and television to celebrate the "glorious Soviet Chekists" has not led to any observable increase in the KGB's popularity.

Yet although Andropov ran the KGB longer than any of his predecessors, he succeeded to a greater degree than any of its other leaders in keeping his own reputation from being identified with that of the KGB. He usually acted less like a professional Chekist than a politician to whom the party had vouchsafed control over the KGB. Moreover, Andropov had much more power as a member of the Politburo than as head of the KGB. Among some intellectuals Andropov even had a reputation of being a "closet liberal" who was not the complete master of the KGB since the majority of his assistants were active members of Brezhnev's "Dniepropetrovsk Mafia." Many of the dissidents considered it possible to address various sorts of appeals to Andropov. For example, it was known that on Andropov's initiative, M. M. Bakhtin, an outstanding literary scholar whose books on Dostoevsky and Rabelais are now considered classics, was brought back to Moscow from his exile in Saransk.

It is no secret that the question of who would be Brezhnev's successor was discussed in the last few years not only by foreign observers but also by all Soviet citizens interested in politics. When evaluating the chances and character of various members of the Politburo and so, for example, comparing Chernenko, Brezhnev's undoubted favorite, with Andropov, a significant portion of the intelligentsia clearly favored the latter. With the grayness, sluggishness, and emptiness of the last years of the "Brezhnev era" in mind, someone remarked: "Let it even be worse—as long as it's going to be different!"

Everyone, of course, was aware of Andropov's decidedly negative attitude toward the dissident movement. Whatever contradictions may have existed among the leaders of the KGB—for example, between Andropov and his first deputy, Tsvigun, Brezhnev's brother-in-law—there was no doubt that Andropov bore personal responsibility for all the basic acts of repression against the dissidents. In his public statements, he stressed that constant battle against the dissidents was one of his more important duties as chairman of the KGB.

Thus, for example, in a report made in 1977 —published in *Pravda*, September 10, 1977— in honor of the 100th anniversary of the birth of Feliks Dzerzhinski (1877–1926, first head of the Cheka), Andropov said:

> . . . Precisely because Soviet society's ideological and political unity has become an important source of its strength, the enemies of socialism have concentrated their most intensive attacks on that unity. This is connected with the incredible fuss kicked up by Western propaganda on the notorious issue of "the so-called dissidents." That very term "dissident" is a clever propaganda invention, designed to mislead public opinion. Translated into Russian, the word means "someone who thinks differently." By putting this word into circulation, bourgeois propaganda intends to create an image of a Soviet system that does not tolerate independent thought in its citizens, persecutes anyone "who thinks differently," that is, as they say, who doesn't adhere to the official line. This image has nothing in common with reality. . . .
>
> I would ask the bourgeois ideologists to have a look at the 49th clause in the new, projected constitution, where the Soviet citizen's right both to criticize and make suggestions is clearly stated. That persecuting anyone for criticism is forbidden in our country is also indicated there with perfect clarity.
>
> It is another matter when a few individuals, isolated from our society, set out on the path of anti-Soviet activity, break laws, supply the West

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with material for slander, sow false rumors, and attempt to attack our society at various points. There is no support in this country for those renegades, nor can there be any. And this is precisely why they cannot bring themselves to speak out at factories, kolkhozes, or offices, for they would be chased right out of such places.

The existence of the so-called dissidents only became possible because the enemies of socialism brought the Western press as well as diplomatic, intelligence, and other special agencies into the picture. It is no secret to anyone that "dissidence" has become a profession in itself, very well paid in foreign currency and other such remunerations, in essence little different from the way the imperialist special services pay their agents. Certain Western politicians hurl what they take to be a "clever" question at us: they ask how we can explain that after 60 years of Soviet power in the U.S.S.R. there still exist so-called dissidents. . . . But it would not be realistic to imagine things otherwise, that among a quarter of a billion Soviet citizens there would be no individuals whatsoever whose thoughts on one subject or another differed from those held by the great majority. . . .

Socialism, in its developed phase, is not proof against there being a few individuals whose behavior accords with neither the moral nor the legal codes of Soviet society. . . . There can be a variety of reasons here—political or ideological lapses, religious fanaticism, nationalistic quirks, cases of personal failure and humiliations—blaming society for a failure to appreciate someone's merits and potential and, finally, in a number of cases, psychological instability. And we must deal with all this. The building of a new society, of the new Communist civilization is a complicated and difficult process. It cannot be otherwise.

The primary reason for this long quotation is that today Yuri Andropov is the head of both the Communist party and the Soviet state.

The prejudices in Andropov's assessment of the dissident movement are quite obvious. I have been familiar with this movement and its main figures for close to 20 years. And I am able to say that among its members there have been some failures and people ready to accept remuneration for their dissidence, as well as people who chiefly sought renown dreaming of a write-up in the *New York Times* or a BBC program. There have been alcoholics and mentally ill people in the movement. But are we supposed to believe that among important party figures there are no moral cripples at all —no bribe-takers and extortioners, no people abusing their power, no fakers, careerists, degenerates, and none that are mentally unstable? Are there no such people in the KGB? Don't we know of many cases in which KGB men have sold out their country for tens or hundreds of thousands of dollars and remained in the West, switching sides at once to the CIA? Morally and mentally defective people can be found in any large human group.

The dissident movement was not primarily the result of actions taken by foreign ideological or intelligence services. It was the result of the shortcomings and faults of Soviet society and of the Soviet government itself. The roots of this movement reach back to the dark days of the Stalinist period when crimes committed by the state were the norm. This movement was strengthened by the attempts to rehabilitate Stalin and Stalinism, and by the attempts to limit the legal rights of individual citizens and national groups. This movement is stimulated by the general dissatisfaction, felt by great numbers of people, with the conditions in our country, the deficiencies in supplying and organizing production, the despotism and corruption of the local officials. The Soviet nation's moral and political unity, so vaunted by the Soviet press, is in fact one of the myths of Soviet propaganda. I am certain that many of the more brilliant dissidents would find very favorably inclined audiences at the factories, the kolkhozes, and the universities. But the authorities prohibit such contact.

I remember how insistent many institutions of learning were in their invitations to Solzhenitsyn in the mid-1960s when the present dissident movement had only just begun, and what success his speeches enjoyed. The audiences at the military academies then paid great attention when the old Bolshevik A. V. Snegov recounted the crimes of Stalinism. Piotr Yakir spoke dozens of times at various institutions in Moscow. At the time, it was not the organizations of the blue- and white-collar workers but

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the party district committees that established a rule that any invitation to a factory or institute should require permission from higher levels of the party. Even after that, dissidents would sometimes speak at student debates, and hundreds of students paid them serious attention.

Despite Andropov's attitude toward the dissidents, some observers have voiced the opinion that precisely because the new leader of the Soviet Communist party was so recently head of the KGB, he would be more liberal now, in order to disassociate himself, to some degree, from the KGB. Others assume that the liberalism of the revamped Politburo cannot consist of more than a few symbolic acts: allowing Sakharov to return from exile, freeing some political prisoners, and so on. The emigrés have expressed similar assumptions. Thus, for example, Pavel Litvinov has written:

> Andropov is entirely opportunistic. He is capable of taking any road. . . . If he wishes to display good will to the West . . . he should free Andrei Sakharov from exile in Gorky and give amnesty to all the leading dissidents still in prison, people like Orlov and Shcharansky. Those actions would show that he is flexible and striving to make changes. It is possible that Andropov might take that route. . . .

Even someone like Vladimir Bukovsky, usually inclined to making very harsh statements, wrote (*Newsweek*, November 22, 1982):

> . . . He is more intelligent than the others, and I think that we can expect him to be more successful. What I guess is that he will try to relax the ideological rift with the Western left in order to increase his influence abroad. It is natural for him. One of the problems he faces is the tarnished image of the Soviet Union among Western left-wingers. But Andropov is a clever guy, and he will try to improve his image. In the first six months to a year he will be sensitive to increasing pressure, especially on the human-rights front, since as the former head of the KGB, he is a very easy target.

Now, some months after Brezhnev's death, such statements are becoming rare. The most convenient means for Andropov to display any liberalism was an amnesty, long expected and in fact proclaimed at the Soviet Union's 60th anniversary. That amnesty, however, did not include political prisoners, not even those who had been sentenced to short prison terms or had only a few months left to serve in prison, exile, or camp. The amnesty did not even affect religious dissidents with relatively short sentences, or those sentenced (under article 162 of the RSFSR's criminal code) for engaging in forbidden economic transactions. A broad interpretation of this article has affected people performing useful work in the service area and small manufacturing. Instead of legalizing their activities, the authorities now have driven them still further underground. Indeed, the amnesty places skyjackers and murderers on an equal footing with vagrants and beggars, for neither category was released.

The new law on amnesty has caused a decrease in the number of statements concerning the authorities' liberalism. Moreover, since January 1983 there has been a step-up in pressure on the few well-known dissidents still at liberty. Summoned to the KGB or the Procurator General, they are threatened with criminal prosecution if they do not desist from their "anti-Soviet" activities, that is, from criticizing this society.

Arrests on a variety of charges have also been resumed. Sergei Khodorovich was arrested in Moscow in the last few years; he had been managing the "Social Fund to Aid the Families of Political Prisoners" founded by Solzhenitsyn in the '70s. V. Albrekht, a member of the "Amnesty" group, O. Radzinsky, a member of a Moscow pacifist group, and several people in the Baltic Republics and the Ukraine also have been arrested.

In spring 1983 the cases of people who had been arrested in the spring and summer of 1982 came to trial. In this instance the authorities displayed a certain "flexibility." The writer L. Borodin, who had been in court before and had thereafter published a series of works abroad with the Posev publishing house, was sentenced to ten years in a corrective labor camp and five years of internal exile. For a 44-year-old man who is not in the best of health, this essentially means life in prison. The publicist V. Abramkin, who was preparing for his release after a second term, was sentenced right in the camp to a third term for "anti-

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Soviet propaganda." The woman who published the religious almanac *Hope* was sentenced to one year in prison and five years of exile. The writer G. Vladimov—who had two books published by Posev and was subjected to two searches in 1982—received permission to leave the country. Five of the seven young intellectuals who had been members of a previously existing group of "young socialists" or "Eurocommunists" (names given the group by Western journalists) were released after a year of investigation and imprisonment as part of a partial amnesty. They wrote a statement condemning the form their activities had taken but without renouncing their beliefs.

The emigration of Jews to Israel and the U.S.A. has been severely curtailed. During the mid-'70s, between 3,000 and 10,000 Jews left the U.S.S.R. every month. Thereafter that number decreased rapidly, and less than 1,000 Jews emigrated in 1982. There has now been an official announcement that Jews will no longer be given permission to emigrate. Emigration by Armenians, Germans, and other nationalities also has come to a standstill. There are exceptions, but they are very rare.

The Soviet Union has quit the International Psychiatric Association for reasons obvious to all. Certain new phenomena observed in the last few months may indicate new ways in which psychiatry is being abused in the U.S.S.R. As mentioned earlier, there were indeed a few mentally ill people among the dissidents, and this probably gave the KGB the idea in the '60s and '70s to place not only the sick but the healthy in psychiatric hospitals. Western public opinion could not, in any given case, distinguish the healthy from the sick and protested nearly all cases of forced hospitalization as if they were identical. But now forced hospitalization has come to a temporary halt. There have been, however, a few cases in which people known to be mentally ill were declared to be of sound mind and sent to labor camps, although they had been treated for various mental illnesses. The forensic experts now diagnose such cases as a "stable remission" and not "incipient schizophrenia" as was usually done in the past.

There has been no change in Andrei Sakharov's status last year—he remains in exile in Gorky. And reports have been received in Moscow of increased cruelty in many camps where political prisoners are held, and that the health of many of them has now deteriorated.

A policy that provides for stepped-up repression of opposition groups in the Soviet Union is in open contradiction to its proclaimed foreign policy, which takes a stand against the arms race and the deployment of new American missiles in Western Europe. In this arena the Soviet Union is not only banking on negotiations with America and the European states but on the support of many social groups in the opposition camp in the West. Meanwhile, it is precisely those groups that speak out vehemently against political repression in the U.S.S.R.

A new confrontation between the U.S.S.R. and the West is still not inevitable, and has not yet reached the critical level of the "cold war" of the 1940s and '50s. On the other hand, the stakes involved in such confrontations are much higher today than they were 25 or 30 years ago. Every possible opportunity must be taken to halt the slide toward a new and even more dangerous "cold war." It would be unrealistic to expect the Soviet Union immediately to change its policy of support for Vietnam and the new Cambodia, or that Soviet military forces would be pulled out of Afghanistan without long negotiations. But if there is the slightest chance of improving Soviet-American relations by, say, releasing Orlov, Kovalev, or Shcharansky and allowing them to emigrate, it would be unwise not to make use of that opportunity. This consideration, purely practical but politically expedient, should also be kept in mind with regard to all the other dissidents who today are being subjected to increasingly severe camp regimes or are languishing in prison.

Translated from the Russian by RICHARD LOURIE □

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Joseph Frank

French Intellectuals Between Wars

Herbert Lottman's recent book on writers, artists, and politics, from the Popular Front to the Cold War, is a lively and valuable contribution to the social-cultural history of the recent past.* No one who grew up during this period, like the present writer, can read it without a surge of old memories and a twinge of nostalgia. Not that one wishes the past it evokes—a past that includes the rise of Hitler, the Spanish Civil War, the fall of France, the almost complete conquest of Europe by the Nazis, the revelations of the Holocaust, and then the explosion of the first atomic bomb and the Cold War—to come back to life. But the memories of youth always have something appealing about them, if only because one remembers primarily one's innocence and illusions; and Lottman's narrative recounts the history of a period dominated by one such illusion.

It was indeed, despite all its grimness and horror, a period of innocence, when the great dream of the Russian Revolution still had not been recognized—except by a handful of people whom nobody wished to listen to, and who were universally vilified—to have become a nightmare. To be sure, the rise of fascism and nazism did not incline one to dwell too insistently on the shortcomings of the Soviet Union; and the French intellectuals of the Left Bank, buffeted by a history they were powerless to influence, were drawn to one or another of these opposing political poles with irresistible force. Rare were those who, while still taking an active part in political life, managed to retain any genuine independence.

Lottman sees his book as detailing "the rise and fall of the committed intellectual"—and so indeed it does. One can also agree with him that the stretch of time he covers—between the 1930s and the 1950s—has an intrinsic unity that marks a new phase in the history of the French intelligentsia. But the terms in which he describes this unity do not, in my opinion, give a sharp enough focus to what actually occurred. He suggests that the political commitment of French intellectuals before 1930 lacked any international dimension and was limited to their own internal affairs. After this time, however, they began to look outward and, as André Gide put it, acquired the conviction that they had "a right to inspect [their] neighbor's territory." This is one of Lottman's controlling ideas; and it seems to me to blur rather than to illuminate the meaning of the events that he recounts.

In the first place, it is not true that the political concerns of the French intelligentsia had previously lacked any international range (one thinks of the pro-Polish agitation that continued through most of the 19th century, or of Victor Hugo's protest against the execution of John Brown). Moreover, the French have always regarded their own internal affairs as of international importance because of the universal mission instinctively attributed to French culture in the world. The history of the "commitment" that Lottman narrates is by no means the new phenomenon that he makes it out to be. What *is* new, however, is that the French intellectuals were now no longer expressing their own national point of view, whether revolutionary or conservative, but choosing sides and committing themselves to ideologies that had been developed elsewhere and were not French at all.

* *The Left Bank*, by Herbert R. Lottman. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1982.

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Even though Lottman does not quite grasp this crucial point, he begins the book with a "curtain-raiser" that symbolically illustrates exactly what had taken place. In 1935, after Stalin had given the word—through Ilya Ehrenburg in Paris—that an international organization of writers should be organized against fascism, a conference was arranged in the French capital. The French wished the Surrealist leader André Breton to be invited even though he had been expelled from the French Communist party. To the French intellectuals, their internal political squabbles were less important than a show of national solidarity; but the Russians threatened to withdraw unless Breton was excluded. René Crevel, a Surrealist who had continued to write for Communist publications, tried to act as go-between; and he committed suicide the day after it became clear that the Russians would not budge an inch. *L'Humanité* devoted a respectful obituary to Crevel as a "revolutionary writer" and attributed his death to the worsening of a recurring illness. He had, it is true, been ill for a number of years; but none of his friends believed his health to have been *that* bad. Lottman is perfectly right to use this episode as a sort of epigraph; it demonstrates how the French intelligentsia had become the plaything of political forces beyond its control.

The first section of the book stresses both the physical and personal contiguity of French intellectual life, concentrated within a small area of the Left Bank of the Seine and dominated by a group of people many of whom had gone to school together in the Ecole Normale. Friendships were struck up there in early years that lasted a lifetime, and created ties that, as Thierry Maulnier wrote, forged "that solidarity among members which seems stronger than religious or political differences." Much the same sometimes happened with friendships that arose because people frequented a particular café, or chanced to be invited to the same literary salon. Such personal ties were strong, and Lottman expresses some bewilderment as he watches old friends move into opposing political camps without feeling obliged to break off their intimacy.

"The resulting confusion in the order of battle," Lottman remarks wryly, "is enough to make one's head spin. It may even suggest that commitments were not always taken seriously, especially when the dilettantes wore the fancy dress of *La Nouvelle Revue Française*." This all too facile cynicism, on which Lottman falls back far too frequently, reveals the limits of his historical understanding, and his inability to comprehend the often tragic dilemma created by the conflict between personal and political loyalties. Nor does he grasp the fact that, among Frenchmen, a natural solidarity continued to exist even in the midst of conflicting allegiances to what were essentially alien causes.

With his second section, which deals with the 1930s, Lottman gets down to his real subject. What he gives is a sort of newsreel coverage, rather like a documentary film, of the interaction between political events and French intellectual life, singling out one or another figure to hold the spotlight for a moment but then moving on rapidly. There is never time to explore anything in depth, and the reader must take Lottman's selection of material from his extensive documentation more or less on faith. One should not do so too incautiously, however, since Lottman has obvious biases; and what he chooses to offer as fact is often nothing but malicious, unevaluated gossip. The most flagrant example of such bias is his consistent denigration of André Malraux, against whom he carries on a never-ending if covert campaign. As an example, we may select this juicy tidbit offered in Lottman's pseudo-objective manner: "A fellow writer and fighter of these years [the 1930s] later confided that Malraux was, quite simply, devoid of political concerns. He was verbal, without any real interest in ideas." Even if we overlook the obvious non sequitur (are "political concerns" the same as "ideas"?), anyone who can believe this about the author of *Man's Fate* and *Man's Hope*, not to mention the *Voices of Silence*, can believe anything.

When Lottman is not indulging his prejudices in this fashion, however, he gives a full and detailed account of the Soviet manipulation of the various writers' congresses and the organizations of intellectuals set up in France

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to fight fascism. There is a fascinating depiction of the activities of the enormously influential but little-known Comintern agent Willi Münzenberg, whom Romain Rolland described as "this great artist in revolutions," and who, in pre-Hitler days, had operated newspapers, magazines, and book clubs in Germany with great success. After the Nazis came to power he shifted his activities to Paris and, in Lottman's view, "a strong case can be made that intellectual involvement in the archetypical form that it assumed in France in the years before World War II was Münzenberg's creation." A revelatory sketch is also devoted to the Czechoslovak Communist Eugen Fried, known as "Clément," who, as the agent assigned by the Comintern to oversee the French Communist party, was its *éminence grise* for many years. Both men were killed under mysterious circumstances, and are assumed to have been dispatched by the Soviet secret police.

A key Left Bank figure during this period was André Gide, whose short-lived flirtation with communism catapulted him into political life, but who then became a Communist *bête noire*. For after a trip to Russia carefully organized to strengthen his allegiance, he ungratefully wrote his courageous *Return from the USSR*, in which he revealed some of the underside of the workers' paradise. Gide, in any case, had always tried to remain his own man, and had advocated a "Communist individualism" in the message that he sent to the first Congress of Soviet Writers held in Moscow in August 1934. Malraux too, though later much more conciliatory because of his active role in the Spanish Civil War—and Soviet Russia was the only country supplying the Republicans with arms—tried to maintain a margin of independence.

When Malraux spoke in Moscow, as Lottman notes, "*out of design or naiveté* [italics added], he chose this platform to challenge the principles of Socialist Realism even as they were being polished up for global dissemination." Lottman, as we see, continues his tactics of underhanded denigration, which he repeats a bit later after recording that Malraux had encouraged Gide to resist the enormous pressure put upon him by close friends to suppress his book. "But when Gide met Victor Serge" Lottman adds, with his judicious air of balancing the pros and the cons, "Serge wondered what Malraux's attitude would be if he were asked to choose for or against Gide." Serge's hypothetical question is given the same weight as the well-attested fact of Malraux's loyal support of Gide (and this on a trip back to Paris from the Spanish front). One can only wonder why Lottman carries on such a personal and vindictive vendetta, which, in the eyes of any careful reader, cannot help but undermine his own credibility.

Not that Malraux's behavior was always impeccable; his refusal to grant permission for his Jewish wife to emigrate under the occupation hardly redounds to his glory. But such unsavory personal episodes, with rights and wrongs on both sides (she refused to grant him a divorce so that he could legitimize a child by his mistress), should not have been allowed to color the depiction of his entire career.

At the end of the 1930s the Nazi-Soviet pact exploded like a bombshell in the midst of the anti-Fascist left, leading to widespread bewilderment and dismay; and this was followed in quick succession by the period of "the phoney war" and then the fall of France. It was to take another year for Hitler to attack the Soviet Union, and during this time there was very little to choose between the attitude of the Fascist right and the Communist left in France. *L'Humanité*, which had opposed the declaration of war and was published underground, asked permission of the German authorities to resume legal publication; and it was not the Germans but the Vichy government that vetoed the idea. This single fact indicates some of the social-political confusion of the time, and why the situation of so many intellectuals under the occupation was so ambiguous. Since the Communist party and the Soviet Union had found it possible to come to terms with Hitler, many on the formerly anti-Fascist left felt it possible to work out their own limited form of cooperation with the German occupants. And how could one nourish a bitter hatred against people one knew on the pro-Fascist right who supported Hitler when the

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Communists were in effect urging the same thing?*

Lottman's chapters on the German years of the Left Bank are the best in the book because they synthesize so much little-known material and succeed in clarifying a stretch of history that has remained relatively obscure. One learns, for example, that the entire French publishing industry collaborated with the Germans in one way or another, and all accepted the restrictions imposed by the occupation authorities—such as the banning of all anti-German works, and of course books by Jewish authors.

Collaboration was made easier by the sympathetic Gerhard Heller, the German officer then placed in charge of French publishing, who admired French culture, deplored Nazi excesses, and often helped his French literary friends out of tight spots. It is Heller who records in his diary—published in France several years ago, and which then enjoyed a *succèss d'estime*—that he wept when the brilliant, gifted, and viciously anti-Semitic Robert Brasillach, the editor of the clamorously collaborationist *Je Suis Partout*, advocated sending French Jewish children to concentration camps along with their parents.

Just who collaborated and who was in the resistance is often difficult to determine; Lottman states that a case could be made out, with equal plausibility, for the thesis that everybody collaborated as well as for the one that everybody resisted. For most of the Left Bank notables, "resistance" consisted of little more than writing occasional articles for the clandestine press that gradually sprang into being or, what was slightly more dangerous, helping in its production and distribution. (A few writers and intellectuals did join the Maquis to fight, and Lottman in fairness might have mentioned these exceptions.)

Some notion of the complexities of the situation may be judged from the astonishing career of Jean Paulhan, who continued to work as editor for Gallimard, helped Drieu la Rochelle turn *La Nouvelle Revue Française* into a collaborationist journal, protected his anti-Semitic and pro-German friend Marcel Jouhandeau, and was saved from the Germans by the intervention of Drieu himself? But he refused to write for the *NRF* because it barred Jews and other authors previously published, and his office at Gallimard's, right down the hall from Drieu's, "resembled a resistance cell." Could Drieu really have been unaware, as Lottman believes, that "Paulhan was at the center of a whole world of underground resistance [publishing] activities" being carried on just a few feet away from his own pro-Fascist citadel? It hardly seems likely, especially since the people who came to visit Paulhan would have been well known to Drieu as anti-Fascist.

On the other side, even those without a single trace of pro-German or pro-Vichy feeling (such as the young Sartre and his friend Simone de Beauvoir) did not refuse to take advantage of whatever opportunities were offered to continue to advance their careers. Simone de Beauvoir worked for the Radio Nationale controlled by the Vichy government, producing her own cultural program in Paris but helping in this way to gain listeners for the voice of the German-supported regime. Sartre's *L'Etre et le nêant* was published by a Gallimard that complied strictly with the German rules for publication, and *Les Mouches* was first produced in the old Sarah Bernhardt theater, by this time purified of its association with a Jewish actress. The critic of the *Pariser Zeitung*, the newspaper of the occupying forces, praised the play; so did the underground *Lettres Françaises*. One could give the

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* Shortly after writing the above lines, I came across an analysis of the same unholy symbiosis of right and left from the pen of Marc Bloch, the famous French historian of Jewish origin, who joined the active resistance and was executed by the Nazis in 1944. Between the time of the French collapse and his own death, Bloch worked on a book called *L'Etrange Défaite* (The Strange Defeat), in which, from his position as a first-hand observer, he tried to diagnose the causes of the French disaster.

From passages printed in *Le Nouvel Observateur* (Aug. 26–Sept. 1, 1983), it is clear that Bloch considered the attitude of the left a major factor in the undermining of French morale. "The strangest thing," he writes, "was, unquestionably, that these intransigent lovers of the human race were not surprised to meet, on the routes of capitulation, with the born enemies of their class and their ideals. To tell the truth, the alliance, strange as it may appear, sometimes rose in spirit higher than the enmity."

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work any political meaning one pleased, and this lack of any *concrete* political significance to early French existentialism made it much easier for its representatives to write and publish. In his later career, to be sure, Sartre devoted most of his intellectual energies to attempting to supply such a content for his metaphysical abstractions.

With the invasion of the Soviet Union by Hitler, the Communist line quickly changed and the Communists resumed the active role they had previously played in organizing the French intellectuals. They joined whatever existed of the underground intellectual resistance, and soon, with their superior discipline and whole-hearted dedication, succeeded in regaining their influence. A whole younger generation of French intellectuals rallied to communism under the occupation, and continued to exercise a determining part in shaping the French culture that emerged with the liberation and the immediate postwar years. As Lottman remarks of the several literary and political generations that now clustered happily around the café tables of St. Germain des Prés in newly liberated Paris, "either they had been Communists, were presently Communists, or would become Communists."

What marked these postwar years, besides the superficial excitement created by existentialism as a frenetic postliberation life-style, were the tensions arising from Stalin's determination to rein in the relative cultural liberalism that had existed in Russia during the war. Zhdanov announced the party's rejection of corrupting Western influences, and the French Communists immediately joined in with an attack on American cultural imperialism. (In those days, this was represented by Henry Miller and Faulkner, rather than—as we heard last year from the French Socialist Minister Jack Lang, echoing the old Communist line—by *Dallas*). The Communists gained control of the National Committee of Writers formed during the resistance, and Louis Aragon, the unscrupulous but highly talented ex-Surrealist turned Communist functionary, became the uncrowned king of French letters. "He was as close to being a commissar of culture as one could find outside the Soviet Union and its bloc of East European allies, with more power over writers and artists than any official Minister of Culture could wield in a Western country."

The Communists, and many others besides, called for a purge of collaborationist writers and intellectuals, and Robert Brasillach was tried and executed. But other voices, some with impeccable resistance records, called for clemency, partly for the personal reasons already mentioned, partly because only writers and intellectuals were being singled out for reprisals while publishers, for example, got off scot-free, as did many other groups who had actively collaborated—and not only in words but deeds. The purge idea petered out once the war against Germany was finished (Brasillach had been executed while the fighting was still raging), and a notorious collaborator like Céline, presently at the height of his posthumous fame in France, was able to return a free man after five years. Members of the staff of *Je Suis Partout* stood trial but received mild prison sentences, and nothing came of a plan, suggested by de Gaulle, to elect resistance writers to vacant places in the Académie Française, which had sheltered a number of distinguished collaborators.

The Communist attempt to regiment French cultural life also met with stiff opposition, and soon the left was split between those willing to follow Communist dictates and those demanding the right to be allowed to think and create independently, whatever their devotion to Communist political aims. Existentialism came under fierce attack, and Sartre at first was tempted by the idea of an alternate Socialist Third Way for France and Europe that would navigate between the official left (Stalinism) and the right (now represented by the United States instead of Nazi Germany). But this movement soon foundered, sabotaged by Sartre himself because of his unwillingness to be suspected of anticommunism in the effort to hold the balance between the two power blocs. By 1951 he had decided that the French Communist party represented the proletariat, and that it was impossible to break completely with the official apparatus and its Russian mentors. For the time being he became the most important (if occasionally rebellious) of the fellow-

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travelers helping to advance the Communist cause on the international scene.

These years also saw a dawning awareness of what life really was like in Russia, although the French left fought desperately to discredit such people as Victor Kravchenko and David Rousset who dared to write openly of the totalitarian aspects of Russian communism. Their disclosures resulted in libel suits, during which the testimony of witnesses for the defense (especially that of Margarete Buber-Neumann, who had been in both Nazi and Soviet camps) deeply troubled the consciences of younger French Communists but did not succeed in shaking their political allegiances. Many also found it difficult to swallow the purge trials being carried on in one East European country after another against Communist leaders, accused, as they had been in the prewar Moscow trials, of the most heinous crimes against the beliefs they professed to hold and that they had zealously served before their arrest. But so powerful was the grip of communism that almost all those who had the courage to express heretical opinions waited to be expelled from the party (perhaps still hoping for grace from on high) rather than taking the initiative and resigning themselves. (More than 20 years later, the appearance of Solzhenitsyn on a nationwide French television program still was capable of causing a sensation—which indicates that the full impact of the truth about the Soviet camps had not even yet been fully assimilated by left-leaning French opinion.)

Lottman ends his book rather abruptly after a brief discussion of the Camus–Sartre quarrel over *L'Homme Révolté*, which represented the split between those willing to draw some fundamental conclusions from the existence of Soviet totalitarianism and those who regarded it only as a regrettable accidental error. His epilogue then places the whole history of the Left Bank as the relic of a bygone era: France is no longer the world power that it was, and the quarrels of its intellectuals have lost importance. In addition, it has become a technological society in which scientists, engineers, and technocrats are much more important than novelists, poets, or philosophers. The road to power now lies through the Ecole Nationale d'Administration, not the Ecole Normale. Lottman's last sentence is a quotation from Beckett's *Endgame*, intended to illustrate the ultimate futility of the cogitations and agitations he has been chronicling. "Mean something! You and I, mean something! Ah, that's a good one!"

It is all too easy, and even tempting, to accept such a disillusioned conclusion, which contains a certain amount of truth so far as France itself is concerned. But Lottman's cynicism, once again, is far from being the whole story; and the view that ideas have no power is one of those pseudo-sophisticated, "hard-boiled" notions that "practical" people like to substitute for genuine thought. How many battalions did that obscure German refugee Karl Marx have as he wore the seat of his pants to a frazzle in the British Museum? Revolutionaries, or at least revolutionary leaders, read books before they seize rifles (if they do) and go out to fight. The Left Bank history that seems so futile to Lottman produced ideas that have had an enormous effect on the modern world, especially in ex-colonial and Third World countries, and to discount them in the way that Lottman does is a grievous error in perspective. But one should read his book for its rich and skillfully presented material, not for his myopic interpretations. □

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Mark J. Osiel

Popular Culture in Latin America

A Lively Debate Within the Left

When Pope John Paul II visited the Brazilian city of Manaus in July 1980, there was a slight but significant change in protocol at the last minute. Members of an Amazonian tribe had been scheduled to perform their dances for the pope, before their representatives would speak with him privately. Such performances are commonplace whenever a pontiff visits Asia or Africa. But on the initiative of the bishops of the region, the performance was cut from the program. The clergymen felt that for the tribe to present its dances to the pope would be to trivialize the spiritual meaning the rituals have for their performers. Such dances, the bishops reasoned, form an integral part of a cultural system whose organizing principles are religious. To allow the pope to enjoy the dances as mere entertainment would be to profane their sacred content. The president of Brazil had had the ear of the pope without first having to dance at his feet. Why not should the Indians?

It may at first seem an amusing curiosity that Catholic bishops should seek to defend the rituals of nonbelievers from corruption by their own superior. But this was no mere indulgence of Third World sensibilities. Beneath the modification in etiquette lies a change in the way the left in Latin America, which includes many church leaders, approaches the question of popular culture.[1] Until recently, the world view of the poor, as embodied in religious, recreational, and aesthetic practices, won little respect from the educated. In the confused beliefs of the common man, the church saw doctrinal deviation and paganism. The left saw alienation and false consciousness. The intellectuals saw illogic and unreason. All three saw superstition.

Today the signs of the celebration of popular culture are everywhere—in political debate, in theological writing, in university symposiums. No less than the continent's literary efflorescence, cultural accomplishments of a "humbler" sort are providing new sources of national self-esteem. "The intellectual protagonists of our national identity will no longer be the academicians and litterateurs," announces anthropologist Renato Ortiz, "but the medicine men of Umbanda and the samba dancers of Carnaval." In a continent whose elites have always looked abroad for inspiration—to the point, at times, of slavish imitation—this reappraisal of the "culture of the uncultured" inevitably carries a polemical undercurrent. But even authoritarian regimes are showing considerable interest in capitalizing on the new developments.

There are some striking differences, moreover, between the way Latin Americans argue about popular culture and the way their North American counterparts have addressed the issue—most recently in regard to the National Endowment for the Arts. Between the lines of social-scientific and theological writing one easily discerns questions that are profoundly political. Does the world view of poor people display an awareness of their own exploitation and of an alternative to it?

[1] This article examines the debate taking place within Brazil, although some of the authors whose works I have consulted come from elsewhere. In some other parts of Latin America the discussion of popular culture is significantly different.

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RESISTANCE AND TRANSFORMATION are stressed by many authors. Eduardo de Menezes writes:

> Encountering no explicit forms of political protest, finding only conformism and alienation, the intellectuals have projected their own anxieties . . . into the understanding of popular culture. At a deeper level, the culture of the subordinate classes is profoundly transformative. It successfully resists destruction and oppression, preserving in its myths an alternative form of consciousness.

The left has customarily seen no more than alienation in the working people's cultural expression. Regina Novaes argues that this is so because the left clings to too narrow a view of class consciousness, and that thereby it "ignores a whole gamut of attitudes and behavior that make up the daily battle against the boss." The left could stand to learn from such experiences of day-to-day resistance, psychologist Eclea Bosi exhorts. "We are unable to see that popular culture teaches us lessons of resistance no less helpful than those of great moments in the history of class struggle. . . . "

The clearest exposition of this new "orthodoxy" among the left comes from Rubem Alves, a brilliant theologian:

> Popular religiosity is not merely archaic survival. . . . It is a protest from below against a strange, new reality imposed from above. . . . Since its adherents are powerless, their protest cannot yet assume an overtly political form and must confine itself to the symbolic plane. Popular religion, therefore, is camouflaged politics. . . . At the proper moment, what now seems archaic will become utopian, the apparent holdover from the past will become a clue to the future, and memory will become prophecy.

WHAT IS IT, exactly, that popular culture seeks to resist? And what is the nature of this alternative vision that is to be recovered from its depths? All who write about these questions identify the object of resistance as "the dominant ideology of capitalist society." What is resisted is a set of ideas that Jorge Ribeiro describes as "the morality specific to capitalist development." This morality includes such ideas as "efficacy, competition, punctuality, practicality, neutrality, rationality, achievement, performance, and asceticism." And what values, by contrast, make up the morality of popular culture? According to Bosi, "true interest in others, a spontaneous humanity, straightforwardness in speech, a sense of the concrete, a certain casualness about future plans—so different from bourgeois notions of planning for tomorrow, of submitting time to the logic of accounting." Other authors add such qualities as communality, sharing, gregariousness.

Modern science comes in for severe attack. What passes for scientific knowledge among the elite professions presents itself in the impersonal language of objective truth. But, in fact, it is only the latest language by which the bourgeoisie depicts its domination as natural and inevitable, charges philosopher Marilena Chaui. In modern capitalist society, she writes, it is science, not religion, that is the opiate of the people. The antipathy toward science extends even to its medical advances. While students of folk medicine now stress its hitherto unacknowledged virtues, earlier scholars are reproached for encouraging scientific medicine. By such encouragement they "were guilty of taking their own ethnic group, social class, or dominant culture as the criterion for medical judgment," according to Marcos de Souza Queiroz. Insofar as traditional belief obstructs the dissemination of scientific ideology, it is politically progressive.

Other truths, too, are uncovered in the subterranean wisdom of popular culture. The rural poor may hate only the local landowner while seeing an authoritarian state as entirely legitimate. But even in that illusion there is truth, Chaui writes. This belief suggests that the poor recognize the possibility of a public sphere beyond the control of the dominant class, a sphere to which they now appeal but may one day aspire. The belief in the frequent occurrence of miracles also receives praise. The believer's appeal for divine intervention "breaks the predetermined order of the world by force of imagination," Chaui continues. The miracle "manifests a truly personal relation between the divine power and the believer. It is the only moment in his life when the believer is certain that his desires are heard."

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A belief in frequent miracles is one element in "folk catholicism," a hybrid form of religiosity far removed from orthodox church doctrine. Another feature of folk catholicism is the village festival, an occasion upon which the clergy usually looked askance. But today the church encourages such festivals. They cement the bonds of friendship and community. Their conviviality permits people to overcome the servility they must show in the workplace.

The samba parades of Carnaval are examined in similar terms by José Leopoldi. They celebrate the equality of the participants, while allowing the dancers to be appreciated on their merits. Life in the slums, with its routine, drudgery, and violence, is transformed into a spectacle of fraternity and fellow-feeling. "In such rituals a society has an alternative vision of itself," writes anthropologist Roberto da Matta. "Why can't this passing moment remain—not as a periodic day but as revolution?"

Even further removed from church orthodoxy than folk catholicism is Umbanda, a large and growing sect whose religious beliefs derive from the former African slaves. Its followers also have incorporated many elements of Catholicism, such as baptism and worship of the saints. In the Umbanda pantheon of divinities figure slaves, Indians, prostitutes, tricksters, and hustlers of the urban underworld. Its membership is composed chiefly of the poor, black residents of the urban periphery, people who still view the Catholic church as an ally of the rich.

Until recently, the church showed little tolerance for Umbanda. Today Bishop Boaventura Kloppenburg recites *mea culpas* for past insensitivities. "We wanted the African . . . to cease being an African, to adopt a Western mentality . . . to adopt the Roman rite. This was pure ethnocentrism and hubris. . . . The black, when emancipated, ceased to accept our rite. . . . He returned . . . to the rhythms of his origin and the myths of his language." Then the violins strike up: "From the depths of his soul, to which the faith of his forefathers had retreated, there burst forth the ancient traditions of his native Africa. Thus Umbanda was born."

The melding of Catholic and pre-Christian beliefs, observes theologian Leonardo Boff, is simply a way of translating the evangelical message into the categories of the local culture. Even early Christianity drew many ingredients from surrounding societies, and thus involved more than divine revelation, pure and simple. "Syncretism is not only inevitable but a positive form by which God reaches out to men, in their concrete historical circumstances, and saves them."

The Pentecostal Protestants, a rapidly expanding group of sects, have usually been viewed by the left with particular distaste. But they provide experience in mutual self-help through the voluntary association of working people, contends Novaes. Such voluntary association has been preciously rare in recent Brazilian history, for the government was suspicious of independent organizations. Through such self-governing associations, people learn the meaning of democracy. The very intensity of the Pentecostal ethos, regardless of its contents, creates certain tensions with the workday world, and so prevents complete accommodation to it. Novaes shows that in at least one rural area Pentecostals are no less likely than others to join unions and to demand political rights.

Even messianic movements, once viewed as the height of human irrationality, are coming in for more positive reassessment. Historians have customarily characterized such movements, a recurrent feature of Brazilian history, as "retrograde, based on ignorance, merely the negative reaction of uneducated bumpkins of the hinterlands to progressive urban culture," charges Alba Zaluar. Now scholars no longer analyze these movements as symptoms of the crisis of rural society, confronted with the transition to modern life, but as intelligible responses to the crises of national politics and international capitalism. The specifically messianic features of the movements tend to drop altogether from sight in the revisionist analysis. These movements have provided rare occasions in which the rural poor entered the stage of national politics, making their presence felt for the first time. Maria de Queiroz sees in the messianic experience the creation of leadership roles for women, and consequently she stresses their modernizing features.

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But perhaps the most conspicuous revisionism is to be found in the recent policy of the Catholic church toward the cultures of indigenous peoples. The bishops no longer seek to convert the Indians, or even to integrate them within modern Brazilian society. In the self-management of individual tribes, and in the federative principle that governs relations between tribes, the Indians present to the white man the vision of a better world, writes church historian Eduardo Hoornaert. Several bishops proclaim that they "feel the urgent necessity of recognizing and promoting certain indigenous values that are more humane and more Christian than our 'civilized' ones, and that constitute a genuine repudiation of our society." These values include "a system of property based on collective rather than private ownership, as is consistent with biblical teaching. . . . All production is based on what people need, not on profit."

Doubts About Popular Culture

IN EPISCOPAL POLICY on the Indian population, we may have the most extreme version of the defense of popular culture. It is also the version that has elicited the most vociferous counterattack. The leader of an ultra-right Catholic organization recently published a book juxtaposing quotations from church leadership, extolling the superior dignity of indigenous cultures, with photographs of their more barbaric customs, such as head-shrinking and grotesque bodily disfiguration.

But the most common criticism of popular culture's defenders is very different. It does not even refer to the Indians, whose culture is in many ways a case apart. The counterargument is simply that defenders of popular culture exaggerate its elements of resistance and vision. If the ruling ideas of every age are the ideas of its ruling class, as Marx believed, then it would be unlikely that popular culture could escape contamination by the dominant ideology, these critics contend. Their argument amounts to a simple syllogism: cultural expression is never entirely independent of social structure. The most conspicuous feature of social structure is class domination. Thus cultural expression will always bear traces of class domination.

Evidence in support of that conclusion is not hard to find. Antonio Neto subjects the songs and poetry of *cordel* literature, the principal reading material of the rural population, to some particularly harsh analysis. Neto, an Althusserian Marxist, is not one to succumb to populist sentimentality. Examining many such publications, he finds that the working-class heroes within them are always celebrated for their personal moral qualities rather than as workers. Today it is the publishing industry, no longer the local craftsmen, which produces most of these pamphlets.

Popular religiosity is no more immune from such influences than popular literature, others argue. Folk catholicism consecrates the inequalities of rural society. It lacks the transcendent ethical standards that are the basis of any social criticism, Camargo contends. The social ethic of Pentecostalism is even worse, writes Alves. If it is more critical of the rural oligarchy than folk catholicism, it seeks to replace it with a laissez-faire individualism that is no better. It discovers the origins and solutions to social problems not in collective action but in personal morality. And it is irretrievably tainted with cultural imperialism, being the import of American missionaries. Similarly, Umbanda has been co-opted by the white middle class, whose members now control most of its federations. They have increasingly purged the religion of its African elements and have explicitly allied it with the progovernment party, in exchange for political favors. Carnaval is now, above all, a highly profitable tourist attraction for foreigners, its moments of communality subject to exploitation.

Even where popular culture retains its utopian elements, as in the uninhibitedness of the festival, these moments acquire their meaning precisely by virtue of their encapsulation. The ritualized exit from social obligations is intelligible only because it assumes an eventual return to normality, reminds Carlos Brandão. Many societies have rituals of rebellion. These may solidify the existing order, says Ortiz, localizing and confining heretical impulses, while acknowledging and defusing them.

The sense in which such "moments of mad-

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ness" offer a vision of an alternative society is, in any event, ambiguous. It may mean that we treat people differently in the marketplace, the workplace, and in politics than we do in friendship, family, and religious brotherhoods. In the former activities, we use people as means; in the latter, we respect them as ends. The two realms are ever in tension. But there is nothing particularly radical in this conclusion; it is, in fact, banal. Any classical liberal would admit that the public and private realms operate according to different principles, and that the private realm can offer a "haven in a heartless world." As to the possibility of overcoming the tension between the two, there may well be similarities between the utopian hopes of popular religious movements and those of secular radicals, as the defenders of popular culture suggest. But the commonality is not in the notion that popular religiosity contains a camouflaged form of radical politics. It is in the fact that secular radicalism has its intellectual roots in Jewish messianism and Christian eschatology. Those common roots have been traced by many historians of ideas, such as Karl Lowith and Mircea Eliade.

The sense in which popular culture constitutes a haven of resistance to the oppressiveness of the working world is a trivial one. If the argument is valid, we should carry it to its logical conclusion. If the song and dance of Carnaval can plausibly be construed as resistance to hardship, why stop there? By taking pleasure in a round of golf the IBM executive can be viewed as struggling against the oppressiveness he feels in having to order so many people about. In the joys of polo the corporate lawyer is seen resisting the alienating impersonality of his large firm, and in the comforts of yachting the surgeon proclaims his stubborn resilience in the face of his hectic schedule. The idea of resistance to oppression can be promiscuously extended to include virtually all forms of working-class leisure. But once this has been done, it is no longer clear why the idea should not be extended beyond the working class.

Contrariwise, the assertion that popular culture carries a utopian project within its breast may mean something more substantial. It may mean that such cultural expression provides small-scale models, such as the festival, whose essential principles may be applied to the organization of the wider society. An attractive prospect, to be sure. But the claim ducks the hard questions. To find utopian kernels buried within popular culture is to say nothing at all about how an entire society might be constructed on their basis. The implication that a modern economy, even a socialist one, could be run on the same principles as Carnaval is amusing, at best, and almost certainly mistaken. (Perhaps the international economy already too closely resembles the anarchical festivities of that occasion.) In short, the excavation of utopia within popular culture offers very little guidance toward a political practice that might be both radical and responsible. Is that, perhaps, too much to ask of it?

If there is confusion, then, about what is to be learned from popular culture, there is also confusion as to what it resists within the dominant culture. If it resists modern science, as in its attachment to ineffective medical practices, that is based on no more than ignorance. This surely is forgivable in the poor, who have been systematically denied access to modern education, but much less forgivable in the educated. Science, as the pursuit of knowledge, *is* part of the dominant culture. But it should not be confused with scientism, the presentation of moral and political questions as if they were technical ones.

Nor is it obvious that the other, nonscientific aspects of the dominant culture are politically regressive. The prevailing view of that culture within the Brazilian debate so far is largely unexamined. If the term refers to the activity of cultural elites, it must surely include the novel and the drama, and the values contained in them. Brazilian literature has been heavily influenced by European modernism. It shares the antinomian, if not quite anticapitalist, orientation of its European models, according to literary critic José Merquior. The dominant culture, then, may not necessarily comport with the values of the dominant class, as Daniel Bell has argued.

What is most striking to an American about the Brazilian criticism of popular culture is what the critics do *not* say. They do not say that many of its practices (such as belief in

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miracles or the animal sacrifices of Umbanda) are contrary to the ethos of modern society. In fact, the very concept of modern society has nearly disappeared from the vocabulary of the Brazilian left. It is contaminated by association with the American "modernization" theorists of the '60s, and thus discarded as a mere euphemism for capitalism. Hence the ease with which Ribeiro casually identified "rationality, neutrality, practicality. . . . " as "the morality specific to capitalist development." It would seem self-evident to most Americans that such values are simply modern ones, having little to do with a society's property system as such. Consequently, values that appear anticapitalist to the Brazilians are likely to strike us as simply antimodern—and hence much less commendable.

Only if one believes that the Industrial Revolution was a monumental historical mistake is the rejection of "achievement, performance, punctuality . . . " going to make much sense. To accept the necessity of such values, however, is not to suggest that the traditional folklore of a rural society must succumb to their corrosive acids. This would be to assume too static and immutable a view of what makes up a living folk tradition, scolds Ruth Cardoso —and to exaggerate the leveling tendencies toward uniformity within modern society, adds Lisias Negrão.

There also is a distressingly *convenient* quality about the discovery of resistance and transformative potential within popular culture. A central dilemma of the democratic left in Brazil, since its involvement in the literacy campaigns of the early '60s, has been to discover a way of organizing and politicizing the workers without "manipulating" them. The underlying question was an old one: If the working class is the emergent historical subject, and if it is therefore to make its own revolution, what role is there, legitimately, for the middle-class sympathizer within its social movement?

If the poor already contain within their culture the seeds of radical consciousness, then the problem is solved. The intellectuals can nurture the soil without being accused of introducing alien weeds. To merely "accentuate" existing tendencies would not be to impose themselves or their own ideas. Convenient indeed. While the finding may console the conscience of the organizer, it should trouble the conscience of the scholar. For centuries the Catholic church combined public criticism of folk catholicism with private tolerance, even indulgence. Today the church professes genuine, new respect for folk catholicism, seeking merely to "develop" the oppositional elements already present within it. The ambiguous relation between profession and practice remains.

The Debate in Brazil and in the United States

AESTHETIC ISSUES, so prominent in the North American and European discussion, are largely absent in the Brazilian debate. In the U.S. we ask whether the standards of good taste are valid for all, and for all time, or simply, in the words of Michael Schudson, "the parochial consensus of elite opinion." The question acquires special significance when issues of funding are at stake: should we endow the local symphony or the bluegrass festival? Brazil's intellectuals have been too estranged from the authoritarian regime to aspire to influence over funding policies. And their political views make for other conspicuous differences within this debate. Both the Northerners and the Latins have seen in popular culture a threat to the interests and ideals of social elites; but while the Brazilians hunt for hints of revolutionary consciousness, the Americans have mostly bemoaned declining standards, the collapse of Western civilization.

To be sure, the content of the culture at issue is very different. But national variations in the debate say as much about the differing politics of intellectual communities as about contrasts in popular culture per se. Moreover, in South America, "culture" is conceived in broader terms than in the North American argument, embracing not only arts and entertainment but any symbolic expression of a world view. If the Latins understand culture more in anthropological than aesthetic terms, it is partly because preindustrial forms of expression in dance, artisanship, music, and religion endure with an intensity they no longer have in the advanced industrial countries. Consequently there are

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very few accusations leveled against defenders of popular culture for romanticist nostalgia. They cannot so easily be accused of seeking to resurrect a long-dead past when that "past" is so clearly a living present to millions of people.

Another consequence is that criticism of the mass media is not so easily written off as the elitism of highbrows. Latin American criticism—and there is plenty of it—differs from that of the Frankfurt School in two ways. Its attack on the so-called culture industry rests not on any contrast to the high culture of elites but on a contrast to the enduring expressiveness of folkloric traditions. And the critique of commercial culture is at once a critique of foreign dependence, since a large proportion of radio and TV content comes from the U.S.

The intellectuals' preoccupation with popular culture has a long history. Just as social scientists periodically "discover" poverty, humanistic thinkers have made a repeated practice of stumbling upon popular culture. When American intellectuals criticized the emerging television industry in the 1950s, Leo Lowenthal pointed out that their concerns and even their arguments were very old, and that fulminations against popular culture had changed little since Pascal.

Although the current debate in South America is very different from its North American counterpart, it too has its historical precedents. The Russian Populists, for instance, sought to uncover in the communal practices of village life the rudiments of the future society. The effort to purify a nation's culture of foreign aberrations, to recover its lost essence in the simplicity of its folk has still other precedents. With all the concern over recovering historical memory, these cases might be remembered as well. Especially poignant is the spectacle of the deracinated Third World intellectuals, seeking to restore the most inhumane practices in hopes of regaining the world they have lost.[2] Could it be that in their very effort to escape dependence on the culture of the colonizer they only recapitulate the latest Western intellectual fashion—the revenge of reason upon itself?

Populists have long contrasted the alleged authenticity of popular culture with the supposed sterility of elite culture. And the cultivation of a flair for popular taste has always offered the educated man, as Edward Shils uncharitably observes, the sensation of "going to the people" without becoming a Marxist. Whether it can offer anything more to the South American left remains to be seen.

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[2] I refer not so much to scholars in these movements as to their much more numerous sympathizers. □

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Benjamin Martin

Spanish Socialists in Power

The national elections of October 28, 1982 opened a new chapter for post-Franco Spain. After 37 years in exile and barely six years since rejoining political life at home, Spain's Socialist party (the PSOE—Socialist Workers' party) found itself catapulted into power by a landslide vote. Nothing like it had ever happened in Spain.

The Union of the Democratic Center (UCD), which had governed since 1977, was literally wiped off the political map, while the Communist party (PCE) plummeted from 13 to 4 percent of the vote. The PSOE, which had received 5 million votes in 1979, this time got over 10 million votes. An unprecedented parliamentary majority resulted: 202 of the Congress of Deputies' 350 seats and 134 of the Senate's 204 seats. Municipal and regional elections in May 1983 registered a comparable advance.

In Spain, economic downturn coincided, after Franco's death, with a fragile return to popular rule. With little experience of living in an open society, the newly constituted parties and those emerging from illegality encountered great difficulty in establishing ideological and structural stability. At first, no single party attained a clear predominance. Then, from the first post-Franco elections of June 1977, the PSOE emerged as the leading opposition party. The remarkable triumph of October 28, 1982 was mainly the result of the disintegration of the center-right UCD. The PSOE displayed a certain political acumen by projecting an image of "moderation." In Felipe González it had a candidate for prime minister with extraordinary popular appeal, and it adroitly positioned itself to take advantage of its rivals' disarray.

The transition to democracy began when King Juan Carlos named Adolfo Suárez, a middle-ranking Francoist politician, as prime minister. On the eve of the 1977 elections Suárez pieced together the UCD, a crazy quilt of political groups. It lacked a rank-and-file base but controlled the government machinery. The UCD proved to be useful in facilitating a smooth transference from authoritarian to popular rule, and especially in keeping Francoist hard-liners in check. But when confronted with the task of governing, the resulting strains on the party's unity became intolerable. Internal divisions and recriminations led to its steady erosion. The UCD began to fall apart while still in office, and by the October 1982 elections it had become a political corpse.

The country's belated modernization and industrialization prevented liberal bourgeois ideas from attaining the acceptance they have had in advanced societies. As a result, ideological and regional fragmentation chronically afflict the ruling elite. This weakness of the democratic right has prevented it from assuming the leading role that center parties exercise in most democracies.

In 1979 both major parties underwent crucial tests. By 1981, the internal divisions that surfaced in the UCD and the government forced Adolfo Suárez to step down as prime minister. On the Socialist side Felipe González, the PSOE's charismatic general secretary, demonstrated his authority by decisively repelling attempts to preserve an exclusively Marxist stamp on the party's program. He proceeded with a rapid "social democratization" of the party's orientation.

González's redefinition of the party's outlook and his strengthening of the organization placed the PSOE in an advantageous position. The UCD was mired in its internal disputes; the Communist party's early advantage had been dissipated by electoral reversals and the failure of its Eurocommunist strategy to co-opt the left-wing space within the political spectrum, as the Italian CP had done. Internal quarrels reduced the Spanish CP to a marginal, demoralized movement. But most decisive was the PSOE's successful renewal of its leadership and outlook over the past decade.

The advent of the Cold War had crushed the hopes of anti-Franco parties that the Allied powers would help them to overthrow the Franco regime. The Socialists, from their exile headquarters in Toulouse, France, had tried to revive their under-

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ground organization inside Spain. It was a disastrous failure. By 1948 the members of six successive underground executive committees had fallen into police hands. Party Secretary Rudolfo Llopis and the leadership, all still from the Civil War era, then decided to refrain from any further major clandestine operations. This gave the Communists an opportunity to fill the vacuum in the opposition within Spain. And the PSOE sank even deeper into ineffectuality.

Spain meanwhile was undergoing great social and economic changes. Accelerated industrial expansion and urbanization, starting in the late 1950s, catapulted the country into the 20th century. A new industrial working class emerged whose earnings increased tenfold between 1950 and the early '70s. The burgeoning urban centers of Bilbao, Madrid, Barcelona, Valladolid, Saragossa, Oviedo, and Valencia now contained a large modern middle class; professionals increased by two-thirds between 1965 and 1968, the service sector by 51 percent, and white-collar workers by 49 percent. A new generation of Spaniards arose that was too young to have experienced the traumas of the Civil War; its values were shaped by the new consumer society.

A rebuilding effort got under way when the PSOE had reached its nadir. Apart from a few isolated circles, the only surviving zones of Socialist influence were in the traditional strongholds of Asturias and Bilbao and in some groups in Valencia and parts of Andalusia. Indeed, the party inside Spain did not amount to more than several hundred members.

It is no coincidence that the renaissance of Spain's Socialist movement started in the midst of the country's economic transformation. Anti-Franco activities, which first had shown signs of strength in the 1950s, now acquired broader participation. Symptomatic was an impetus in Seville in 1966 where Alfonso Guerra, now a prominent PSOE leader and deputy prime minister, assembled a Socialist youth group that included Felipe González. By 1969 the Sevillians joined forces with party leaders in Bilbao, Madrid, and Asturias in an effort to persuade the Toulouse gerontocracy to give greater priority to reinvigorating the party inside the homeland and to transfer its headquarters back to Spain. And the party's deeply disillusioning experience with the Spanish Communists (PCE) during the Civil War had created a state of mind that worked against any form of cooperation among the various anti-Franco groups. Greater tactical flexibility was therefore proposed by the young people of Seville. The Llopis leadership adamantly refused. It was a contest of political wills that went well beyond differing views on strategy; it was, fundamentally, a generational conflict pitting the leaders who had survived the Civil War era against a new generation of rising young leaders.

By 1972 the "Renovators" succeeded in vanquishing the Llopis leadership that had run the party since 1944 (Llopis died this year at the age of 88). Two years later, Felipe González was named general secretary, and so the Sevillians became dominant within the party organization.

Though, by 1976, the leadership was showing signs of a developing sobriety, the party congress held that year continued to reflect radical views. The PSOE was defined as "a class party and therefore a mass party, Marxist and democratic." Plainly, it was too much to expect a movement fresh out of clandestinity to shed an outlook shaped by years of dictatorship. But uncertainty over what would happen after the death of Franco caused a postponement of any airing of doctrinal differences. Nevertheless, despite the belligerent language in party documents, nobody raised any objections to the exceedingly moderate platform adopted for the 1977 election campaign. Once a large electoral constituency had been acquired, it was only a matter of time before the gap between rhetoric and reality would be narrowed.

The success of PSOE moderation at the ballot box induced most of the membership to acquiesce in the gradualist reform strategy.

Undeniably, substantive changes have taken place in the outlook of Spanish socialism, yet certain features persist. The tradition of doctrinal tolerance has been retained, and this has permitted the coexistence of diverse strands of socialist opinion in the party. During the early 1970s, this facilitated the incorporation of ex-anarcho-syndicalists, former POUMists, and even Trotskyists. More recently it has permitted an influx of former Franco supporters, former left-wing moderates of the UCD, increasing numbers of ex-Communists, and of some who had tried to establish groups on the extreme left. Since this is the first time a Socialist government is in power since the 1930s—what with the still unconsolidated return to democracy and the severity of the economic crisis—few people question the need for a temperate course.

In 1974 the party had only 4,000 members, equally divided between those in Spain and those in exile. In December 1976, when the PSOE's legal status was restored and its first congress was held in

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Spain since the Civil War, the membership had doubled. On the eve of the 1977 elections it was claimed that the party had some 75,000 members, but 20,000 is closer to reality.

The breakthrough of 1977 opened the flood gates. Within a year membership in the PSOE went over the 100,000 mark. Close to half its members have affiliated since 1977. Most members of the Federal Committee (akin in concept to a "Central Committee") have entered the party since 1974. The bulk of those who came in before 1977 tended to be activists with a relatively high ideological awareness. But, concludes José Félix Tezanos, who has conducted a study of the PSOE, the new PSOE member "is quite similar to the 'average Spaniard' and differs from older members in that politics is not the center of his life. To a great extent, he joined the PSOE as an extension of his trade union commitment.... In general, this member is not very active or politically educated...." The fact that half the members are post-1977 recruits has made it easier for the leadership to embrace a pragmatically moderate outlook.

The distinctiveness of the PSOE's rebirth and Spain's laggard political culture have endowed the movement with certain special traits. It has become the country's most popularly based political force, but it has not succeeded in acquiring a membership base commensurate with its role in national affairs. It has the smallest membership of any comparable Socialist party in Western Europe. The Italian party has 450,000 members, while the French Socialist party, never known for its large rank and file, claims twice as many members as its Iberian neighbor. Furthermore, the voter/member ratio, which stood at more than 500:1 before October 1982, since then has doubled to 1,000:1, a proportion hardly known in earlier European Socialist experience.

The legacy of 40 years of authoritarianism continues to be an obstacle to political modernization. A survey conducted at the outset of the democratic changeover, for example, revealed that 40 percent of the population believed the government was of no concern to them—but a matter for "those who ruled." Government by popular consent therefore appeared to many Spaniards as an exciting novelty. By the thousands they thronged into the parties and independent trade unions. But it was a short-lived enthusiasm. Disenchantment set in after the 1979 elections, and most organizations, especially on the left, experienced sharp drops in membership. The Francoist inheritance, the deficiencies in civic consciousness, the lackluster of conciliatory politics engaged in by all the parties to sustain the transition process, and the fact that the return to democracy took place in the midst of a deepening economic crisis—all this had a chilling effect on the political process.

Within a year, PSOE membership plunged to approximately 70,000 (left-wing leader Pablo Castellano insists it dropped to 37,000). A slight recuperation took place in late 1981, but membership levels remained well below 100,000 until very recently.

Bureaucratization is an ever-present danger in all popular movements, but especially in one with a reduced membership base. The number of PSOE members who do not hold public posts or trade union offices or whose employment is not directly or indirectly dependent upon party affiliation is disquietingly small. It has been estimated that 30,000 to 35,000, including most party cadres, hold some sort of public position. When we add the 36 percent of the membership lacking formal education and a further 6 percent who are illiterate, few remain who are sufficiently informed politically and free from institutional influences to be able to question party policies or strategies.

Despite occasional heavy-handedness and a tendency to concentrate decision-making at the top, the PSOE, nonetheless, remains the most democratic and open of all Spanish parties. The situation that has developed is not so much the leadership's responsibility as it is the result of operating in a society in which political consciousness has not yet fully evolved and where bureaucratization is a deeply embedded characteristic.

Though boasting that it has the support of the working class, the PSOE's leadership is overwhelmingly composed of middle-class intellectuals. On the leading committee, 11 out of 25 members are university professors and most of the others are professionals; only two are blue-collar workers. This concentration of academicians and professionals has come about because many of the party's key figures first entered political life through the anti-Franco student rebellions of the '50s and '60s. In Madrid they formed part of "the Generation of the '50s and '60s," and in Andalusia the reorganized movement received a major impetus from a socialist youth group of the mid-'60s that initially consisted mostly of university students. The Federal Executive Commission is therefore largely composed of that small group of intellectuals who entered the party in the '50s and '60s, while the larger Federal Committee is more heavily weighted with people who have come in since 1974,

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especially the new generation of trade union leaders who constitute 55 percent of its membership. A glaring deficiency is the small number of women in the party—9 percent of the membership. The real situation is actually much worse, for a large number of the women are influenced by family traditions or pressures. This reflects the subservient role of women in Spanish society, especially outside the major urban centers. So far, there has been a serious failure to attract politically conscious women to the party and especially to a place in the leadership.

Still another knotty problem is the blurring that has taken place in the policy-making roles of the government executive and the party. The foremost figures in the party, General Secretary Felipe González and his imperious right arm, Alfonso Guerra, continue to retain their leading party functions while serving as prime minister and deputy prime minister. And three national secretaries, Javier Solana, José Maria Maravall, and Joaquín Almunia, serve as cabinet ministers but without relinquishing their party positions. Deprived of the full-time services of its most important members, the party's policy-making organs cannot function properly. González and other members of the government continue faithfully to attend meetings of the PSOE committees, but their attendance amounts to what one insider has described as *mimetismo* (mimicry). Effective policy formulation takes place within the government, and the party executive tends to follow up. This is a problem without easy solutions.

Among the socialist parties of southern Europe that have gained power in recent years none has displayed greater moderation than the PSOE, and the reasons for this are mainly the perceived special circumstances in today's Spanish society. In the early '80s, the specter of a Francoist resurgence led by military rightists had a muting effect on Spain's political life. The government's failure to counter the Basque ETA's systematic assassinations of army officers and of policemen had brought military resentments to a boiling point. Fascist gangs sought to stoke discontent through violence in the streets and by encouraging military plotting against the parliamentary regime.

It was in these circumstances that military hardliners launched their putsch on February 23, 1981; they would have succeeded but for the forceful intervention of King Juan Carlos.

For the remainder of that year and well into the next the precarious survival of the country's nascent democracy aroused deep apprehension. The UCD government, led by the uninspiring Leopoldo Calvo Sotelo, became transfixed with fear at the possibility of another coup attempt, despite overwhelming popular support for continued democratic rule. And as support continued to steadily shift to the Socialists, quarreling and divisiveness intensified within the UCD.

The Socialists now faced difficult choices. Were they to win the elections, wouldn't that trigger another coup? If the PSOE somehow did not take office, the continuance of a weak government would once again encourage the military to try to reduce civilian authority to impotence. Spaniards describe this kind of choice as being caught between the sword and the wall.

Despite anxieties as election day neared, fears of preemptive actions by military Francoists proved to be unfounded. The decisive margin of the Socialist victory and the abysmal showing by the extreme right (it lost its only deputy elected in 1979) forced the neofascist New Force (Fuerza Nueva) to disband. Since then, moreover, under the discreet prodding of the Socialist government, military commanders have taken more forceful disciplinary measures against conspirators. Although some unrest persists, there seems to be no more antigovernment plotting among the military.

The Socialist government is giving the highest priority to a solid anchoring of the democratic structure. This endeavor requires cutting away much of Spain's archaic social and political undergrowth. As for the depressed economy, it is simply too vulnerable and too dependent on the international economic system for substantive innovations. Some measures involving a modest degree of income redistribution are being instituted. But in a country where many public enterprises operate inefficiently and are a heavy drain on the exchequer, and where more than 40 percent of the GNP comes from the public sector (legacies from the Franco era), further nationalizations would be inconsequential.

The Socialists' first year in office has been largely devoted to recruitment and replacement of key personnel and to becoming more conversant with the responsibilities of governing. Some steps toward a larger scheme of reform have been taken. Some supporters of the government, however, show impatience with what they regard as excessive timidity in the pace and scope of reform. "The problem of politics," responds Defense Minister Narcís Serra, "isn't finding the formula; it's finding the right moment. It's a question of rhythm, of maintaining a cruising speed without spurts. We

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can't go too fast or we'll provoke resistance from the right, and if we go too slow we'll lose popular support."

The measures instituted thus far include reforms in the criminal justice system, a moderate strengthening of public education, and a restructuring of university standards and structures. An industrial reconversion program has also been launched. There have been modest changes to permit abortion under restricted conditions, and the decriminalization of pot. Further progress on the transfer of powers from Madrid to the regional governments awaits the outcome of elections in the Basque country and Catalonia in the spring.

Before the advent of the Socialists, foreign policy played a minor role in national affairs. Now a concerted, though so far not very successful effort is under way to gain Spain's participation in European security and economic decision-making. And Prime Minister González, who also is the vice-president of the Socialist International in charge of Latin American affairs, is increasingly involved in the search for a negotiated solution to the crisis in Central America. (See my article in the Fall 1983 *Dissent*.)

Socialist rule for some time to come seems unassailable. The splintered forces of the right and center-right remain too engrossed in rebuilding their forces to provide a credible challenge. On the left, the Spanish CP has not yet ended its peregrinations in the wilderness. The primary concerns are over high unemployment and the government's inability, at least in the short run, to lower the jobless rate. Half a million industrial jobs have plans to reduce the work force in deficit-ridden, overmanned government-owned industrial plants are encountering stiff labor opposition, and uneasiness grows over the failure to suppress, thus far, Basque terrorist groups.

Nonetheless, the national mood seems to be one of relief at finally having a government with the strength and will to govern. There is a feeling that the worst is over in the perilous return to democracy. But skepticism prevails concerning the government's ability to pull the country out of the economic trough and to deal with the abiding problem of the military.

The success or failure of the Socialist experiment hinges in large measure on the government's ability to cope with economic stagnation; this year inflation has been reduced by 2 percent, to the targeted 12 percent; but unemployment has risen to over 17 percent, Europe's highest.

Difficult times are ahead for wage-earners and trade unions. After five years of unrelieved decline in purchasing power, more of the same is anticipated. Before there can be an expansion of the labor market and before wages can resume their upward course it is necessary, government people argue, to effect reductions in inflation and unit production costs so that Spanish products can be more competitive in foreign markets. The PSOE's coming to power is a case of the right party at the right time. No other Spanish party has adapted so well to post-Franco realities. But the difficulties cannot be overestimated. Even the best and the brightest are going to need all the good breaks they can get. □

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Irving Howe

The Troubles of *Daniel*

There is a political sensibility—it can be found in the pages of *The Nation*, though elsewhere too—that might roughly be called "the troubles and confusions of the children of Stalinism." Children literally, children figuratively . . .

The writers who cultivate this sensibility are not Communists. They have passed through a time of disillusion or were lucky enough to have escaped it. But they are not anti-Communists either, and when they hear a speech by Ronald Reagan or read an article in *Commentary*, they respond to its crudeness with a visceral anger, as if still back in their youth during the McCarthy years, when their parents—literal, figurative—were having a bad time. Their visceral anger is often justified, but with it can follow a relapse into political stances that isn't.

These are intelligent and decent people. They would not deny that the Soviet Union is a dismal tyranny and the Communist movement its dismal agent. But then their minds drift back to their fathers and mothers, those garment workers and dentists in Brooklyn and the Bronx who worked selflessly for or with "the party." And even though they know these parents were caught up with an evil movement, they still want to honor the integrity, or at least the motives, of their parents.

Tell these people that it's possible to hold both judgments simultaneously—the Communist movement was corrupt and authoritarian, the Jewish immigrants drawn to it were often good people—and they will surely agree. But emotionally they find it hard to keep this complex balance, for they are still the children of their parents.

It is this political sensibility, I believe, that informs the film *Daniel*—whether through direct transmission or cultural osmosis hardly matters. The plot of the film is based on the case of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, though in publicity material the director, Sidney Lumet, and the scriptwriter, E. L. Doctorow (from whose novel *The Book of Daniel* much of the story has been drawn), somewhat coyly deny the obvious dependence of the film on the Rosenberg case.

Daniel is a bad movie with a few good moments, and I must confess that both the badness and the goodness of it moved me, not in the way an achieved work of art can—toward insight and resolution—but in the way one can be moved by a visit to the scene of early years, old disasters.

The film, on the face of it, is centered on Daniel, son of "the Isaacsons" (the Rosenbergs thinly disguised). A graduate student, Daniel is trying to escape from politics entirely so as to rid himself of childhood memories such as the terrifying moment when he saw FBI agents stomp through his parents' apartment and take away his father. Scenes portraying the ordeals of the "Isaacson" children are strong, in the way a blow to the face can be strong.

The film shuttles back and forth between shots of the children struggling to understand their parents' ordeal and shots of their parents head-deep in Communist politics. The whole movie has a jazzed-up, high-powered aura: jerkiness of rhythm, sharp cutting, rapid brutal shots, heavy lighting—technical bravura in behalf of intellectual incoherence. Persistently the makers of the film have claimed to be concerned mainly with the problems of Daniel and his distressed sister, but I think any responsive viewer must recognize that what really grips the emotions of director and scriptwriter is the fate of their parents. Given their choice of subject, how could it not?

SOME OF *DANIEL*'S TROUBLES are characteristic of American movies. Our directors work out of an unbreakable conviction that to allow their characters a few minutes of serious conversation, such as human beings do sometimes conduct, would drive their audiences out of the theaters. As a result, nothing in *Daniel* is provided with sufficient detail or progression. The jumpy camera doesn't rest long enough for anything about communism in the

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Jewish immigrant milieu to become clear, let alone sink in.

Lumet is a director with a certain order of talent, a lurid craftiness in tensing and pacing that serves well enough for ordinary melodrama but is quite inadequate for a film that, if it's to say anything at all, must aspire to say something complex. But Lumet's style is that of socko city cynicism, in its own way quite as manipulative and cheapening as the rural idyllicism Hollywood favored a few decades ago. When Lumet tries to deal with a serious matter, such as the Communist experience in New York, the result is rather like what you'd expect if Telly Savalas played Lear.

There are a few good moments. In one scene at a Communist summer camp, a WASP leader, perhaps meant to suggest Earl Browder, strongly defends the Hitler-Stalin pact and the assembled Jewish comrades rush up to thank him for his illumination. Oh my God—the pitiful delusion, the delusionary innocence of it all! This is the film's best moment, but it will probably be meaningless to many people because Lumet races through it, not troubling to place it in an illuminating context.

There's another scene in which "Isaacson"—played with manic excess by Mandy Patinkin—returns from the army during the Second World War. He is an NCO eager for "the second front" and pleased to be displaying, before a roomful of comrades, some evidence of manliness. He then starts to perform a bizarre sort of "hasidic" dance to the strains of the *Red Army Song*, and for one unnerving moment his clumsy shuffle captures something of the ecstacy of fanaticism.

Such bits brought back to me memories of those pure-hearted, deluded, nice, and vicious garment workers and dentists who had yielded their souls to the Soviet myth. They were our enemies, yet the truth is that in some deep way they were also very much part of the world in which the handful of Jewish anti-Stalinists lived—for they too were immigrants or the children of immigrants, they too prided themselves on having a "historical vision," they too quoted from Marx.

At the least, then, the makers of *Daniel* have had the courage to recognize that an important part of the Communist experience, especially in large cities like New York, had a Jewish coloration. This is a welcome change from the disingenuousness of earlier "progressive culture."

MUCH OF *DANIEL*, HOWEVER, is disingenuous. A film that hugs the skirts of history and works hard to exploit historical memories has an obligation to be minimally faithful to historical reality. To be sure, writers and directors have the right to invent characters and incidents, but if they claim, or imply, that they are rendering an important historical event, then their legitimate bounds of invention are severely circumscribed. Now, in *Daniel* there are significant departures from the actual course of the Rosenberg case—not nearly enough to establish the film as an autonomous fiction free of the constraints of history, but decidedly enough to tilt the film toward the undeclared judgment that the Rosenbergs were innocent.*

At no time does the film venture a clear or explicit statement: they were, they were not guilty. It maintains a pretense of agnosticism, but the decisive emotional weight is directed toward pressing us into partisanship for "the Isaacsons," and since the fictional disguise is so thin, for the real-life Rosenbergs. They are depicted as innocent zealots who couldn't tell an atomic diagram from a baseball scorecard—which would be all right if everyone seeing the film didn't know that "the Isaacsons" really *are* the Rosenbergs. Their children are shown as suffering victims, which no doubt the Rosenberg children were. But while eliciting sympathy for the children is an act of humaneness, eliciting it for them *in order* to prod us into solidarity with the parents is an act of deceit.

Finally, in its treatment of "the Isaacsons" *Daniel* is not so different from *The Godfather* in its treatment of the mafia. You are whipped into unearned emotions in behalf of Julius and Ethel just as you are whipped in behalf of Don Corleone —a shade less, perhaps, since no actor in *Daniel* is as powerful as Marlon Brando in *The Godfather*.

Had *Daniel* been conceived with the single- or simple-minded courage of fanaticism, insisting that the Rosenbergs were simply innocent victims of the Cold War, it could at least have had a lucid pattern of narrative and implication. Had the film been made with the courage of what I think is probably

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* A few of these changes were noted by David Denby in a review in *New York* magazine:

> Julius Rosenberg was not a radio repairman [as he is made out to be in the film] but an engineer who had worked on military contracts for the Army Signal Corps. The person who informed on him was not the seemingly fatuous old family dentist of *Daniel* but Ethel's brother, David Greenglass, a machinist who had worked at Los Alamos in 1944–45, during the building of the atom bomb, and who confessed to stealing secrets and passing them to Julius. The Rosenberg defense attorney was not the apolitical Jewish gentleman shown here . . . but a veteran crusader for left-wing causes who may well have undermined the Rosenbergs' case in order to protect the Communist Party.

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the truth—that Julius was guilty, that the case against Ethel was weak, and that the trial and execution were outrageous**—then the film could not only have had a lucid pattern of narrative and implication but also a measure of moral complexity. Still better might have been a touch of realism, say a shot in which a hard-bitten CP leader (V. J. Jerome?) says the Rosenbergs were "heroes" for going to their deaths without betraying their connection to "the party."

But, alas, the political sensibility behind *Daniel* doesn't lend itself to any coherent point of view. It must resort, consciously or not, to the subterfuge of claiming to say one thing while actually stressing another, with a characteristic outcome of "trouble and confusion." □

** This view has been developed with great care in a new book by Ronald Radosh and Joyce Milton, *The Rosenberg File* (Holt, Rinehart & Winston.) Since *Dissent* has a policy of not reviewing books by its editors, there won't be a review in its pages. Which doesn't keep me from saying that anyone at all interested in the case ought to look into *The Rosenberg File*.

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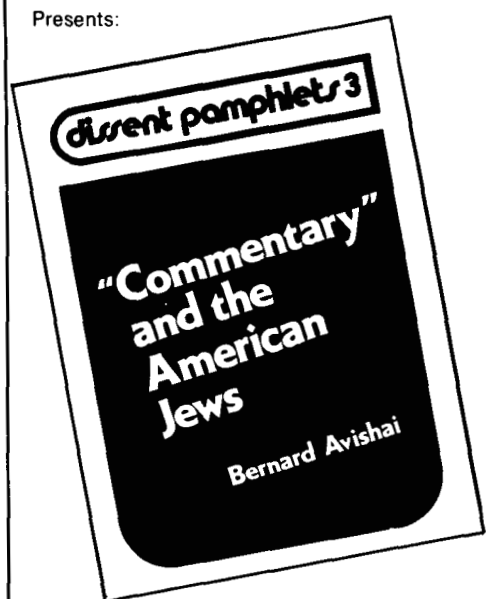

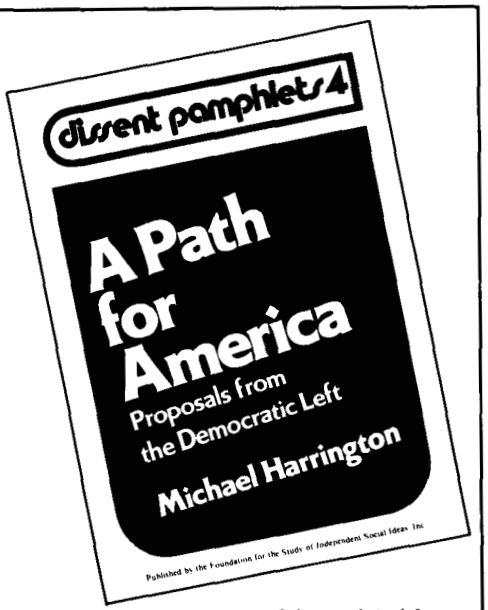
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H. Brand

On the Skills of Our Work Force

In his article, "Human Capital and Economic Policy" (*Dissent*, Summer 1983), Robert B. Reich offers a critique of current corporate and government programs for improving the skills of the American work force. He describes some of the impediments to the mobility of workers that prevent or complicate their efforts to upgrade their skills. He notes the inadequacies of the unemployment insurance program and of many other regional or local programs. He deplores the waste of human resources in dead-end jobs and in unproductive pursuits, such as financial manipulation. The improvement of human capital lies for him at the core of economic policy, and he recommends tax incentives as well as a voucher system to begin to deal with it. The vouchers would be issued to unemployed workers, entitling them to training by private firms, whose training costs in turn would be reimbursed by the government.

I have fundamental disagreements with Robert Reich's approach and take exception to some of his criticisms. He would turn over the task of improving human capital—a term I accept here only for the sake of the discussion—to business, even though the hurdles he cites as impeding such improvement are mostly linked to the business system, or to the economic policies that sustain it. He ignores the history and meaning of federal training policies over the past 20 years in their bearing upon the failure of business to utilize human resources. And he does not explore the significance of dead-end jobs in terms of the organization of industries and of work that generates them and tends to obviate worker training.

By far the most important source of wasted human resources is unemployment, which Reich barely mentions. Between 1979 and 1982, the number of unemployed workers rose 79 percent, to 10.7 million; the number of workers on short schedules (or involuntary part-time work) increased 72 percent, to 6.2 million. Moreover, the average duration of unemployment grew by four to five weeks, to a period of about four months. The squandering of energies and talent implied by these statistics is clear when we focus on the increased unemployment among the more highly skilled and educated workers. Among professional and technical personnel, unemployment rose 55 percent over that period, and among crafts and other skilled workers by 37 percent. This magnitude of unemployment makes Mr. Reich's argument for intensified investment in human resources somewhat irrelevant. High unemployment has been largely attributable to regressive economic policies, designed to constrain wage and salary claims and to encourage investment in physical capital. The waste of human resources can thus be linked directly to the business system that engenders such policies.

Robert Reich discusses federal job-training programs in a most cursory manner. He dismisses them for in effect excluding skilled workers for retraining. True, retraining workers with obsolescent skills was the aim only of the initial Manpower Development and Training Act of 1962. Its passage had been spurred by fear of worker displacement by automation. Soon thereafter, federal job programs became part of the War on Poverty—the causes of poverty having been defined largely in terms of unemployability as well as of a lack of skills and employment opportunities. Such refocusing, however, broadened the objectives of those programs: imparting employability and skills to the disadvantaged arguably enhances society's human resources no less than retraining persons with obsolescent skills.

How effective federal employment-training programs are has not ceased to be disputed, but it is difficult to generalize about them since they address diverse needs. But the raising of skills has been widely documented. Studies of post-training earnings of participants of on-the-job training (OJT) programs indicate significant increases. The author of one such study (sponsored by the National Commission for Employment Policy) finds "that OJT produced large and sustained earnings gains for women and men, whites and blacks . . . "

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(*Sixth Annual Report* of the Commission, p. 91). Less pronounced but still significant improvements have resulted from institutional (classroom) training. Even Public Service Employment jobs—which were a primary focus of federal employment-training programs for a brief spell during the 1970s and were not principally oriented toward skill improvement—raised participants' post-program earnings, thus meeting a central criterion of such jobs. "The outputs of public jobs—in socially useful tasks accomplished, and in human capital preserved and improved—are in the end the principal criteria for evaluating programs," economists Martin Neil Bailey and James Tobin have written. (Quoted on p. 74 of the *Report*.)

Cyclical downturns will dissipate many of the gains made by participants in federal employment-training programs. During upturns, employers are often willing to lower hiring standards and to institute such programs. But when economic conditions worsen, those who were hired last are first fired, and the erstwhile beneficiaries of the programs are usually among them. Here again, economic policies that do not compensate for cyclical employment losses lie at the root of the destruction of human capital.

REICH DISCUSSES DEAD-END LABOR at some length. Beyond question, such labor mostly degrades those who do it. But he would not upgrade it, or change the organization of work (for instance, by consolidating rather than subdividing tasks) or of industry (by eliminating centralized financial control), which fosters such labor. Certainly, he mentions no such possibilities. Rather, it appears that he would create ways of shifting large parts of such labor into the high-skill, high-wage jobs in industries able to withstand international competition. It might be noted that massive shifts of labor have occurred only under pressure of wartime needs. More to the point, he doesn't tell us just what industries or functions he has in mind, except to speak of "flexible system enterprises." I suppose that he means manufacturing establishments producing in relatively small batches rather than in volume. However, flexibility in producing small batches is being greatly advanced by the introduction of microelectronic controls, computer-numerical controls, and robots. This brightens neither the future of skilled work nor the prospect of high wages.

If, as Reich writes, a large proportion of the 21 million jobs created between 1971 and 1981 were "dead-end"—and the trend could be extended back to 1961—then we must assume that a systemic cause exists, a cause inherent in the industrial and business system that makes for such jobs. And this cause isn't confined to shaping jobs in services and trade; it operates in manufacturing as well, as indicated by Reich when he notes that ". . . America's high-technology industries are filling almost as many dead-end jobs as skill-intensive ones." The cause consists of extreme standardization, specialization, and fragmentation of work. This development has also affected such professions as medicine, dentistry, and engineering. But skilled factory and construction work has escaped from it least of all. Cost-reduction efforts and technical innovations have usually yielded the greatest financial benefits to management when concentrated on simplifying or eliminating skilled work. Examples of skill-reducing technologies abound. Machine-tool manufacture and use have been transformed in this sense by numerical control; telephone-repair services by the adoption of electronic switching; printing by electronic composition; carpentry and millwork by modular fabrication in factories. In commercial food services, the extreme (and, of course, deliberate) fragmentation of work is indicated by the enormous operations manual of McDonald's, which consists of some 400 pages and details the running of its shops and machinery down to the minutest detail. The general tendency is to build the skill into the machines, reducing the worker to operating them rather than making the product.

True, with the simplification or elimination of existing skills, new skills will also develop. But where? Of the 21-million increase in jobs noted above, close to 40 percent occurred in professional, technical, managerial, and administrative positions, and only 12 percent in skilled blue-collar work. The remaining portion of the increase centered among clerical, sales, semiskilled blue-collar, and service workers. These data do not point to a great need for highly skilled production workers, as Reich suggests, or indicate any urgency for shifting workers into goods production.

There is an added point to be made here. Robert Reich deplores the fact that the *increase* in employment in eating and drinking places has been greater than the *total* employment in the auto and steel industries combined. He deplores this because it supposedly shows that jobs in low-skill, low-wage industries have been expanding, while jobs in high-skill, high-wage areas have been contracting. But he errs in associating skill levels and wage levels. About 60 percent of all auto workers and 50 percent of all steel workers are in semiskilled and unskilled jobs, compared with 75 percent in eating and drinking places (and the 75 percent under-

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states actual skill levels since it includes cooks, who account for about one-third of all food-service workers). Wage levels differ so much, not because of different skill levels but because the auto and steel workers have been unionized for decades, while food-service workers have not, or to a minimal extent. Over the past two decades, the average restaurant worker's hourly wage has declined relative to the steel and auto worker's—from 37 percent in 1964 to 31 percent in 1982. The basic answer to such wage deterioration would be a resolute full-employment policy, creating pressure to raise wages and encouraging unionization.

A REASON—within the context of the book from which the article was excerpted, perhaps *the* reason—for Reich's emphasis on improving human capital in the United States appears to be the international competitiveness of American labor. He notes the "dependence" of auto and textile workers upon two industries "that are losing rapidly to international competition." He criticizes the inadequacy of corporate training outlays for employees, "even though the need for such training is much greater now that America's competitive position is in jeopardy." But is it true that such jeopardy (assuming it exists) has arisen from lack of adequate skills?

From the way I read the evidence I've come across, the competitive position of U.S. industry is quite favorable in areas of comparatively high skill levels and research expenditures. According to Department of Commerce data, the U.S. balance on merchandise trade was close to $50 billion in the *black* in 1980 when the deficit from petroleum imports is excluded. Among industries contributing to the surplus were: foods and feeds (where output is linked with a large infrastructure of nonfarm inputs of manufactures, services, and laboratory research); chemicals; many categories of electrical and nonelectrical machinery; aircraft; and professional and scientific instruments. The drop in exports since 1980 relative to imports was caused by anti-inflationary policies that drove up interest rates and caused the dollar to be overvalued—not by diminishing capability to compete because of inadequate skill. The large U.S. deficits on passenger cars, steel, and clothing are linked to higher unit labor costs here, not to lack of worker skill. Higher unit labor costs can be offset, of course, by higher output per employee (or productivity). The technology underlying higher productivity now is rapidly diffused throughout industrialized and industrializing countries. Thus foreign labor-cost advantages cannot be overcome in a perhaps growing number of industries manufacturing readily transportable goods. No matter, then, how much additional skill the American work force acquires, it may be unable to compete against imports of many kinds.

But why should workers be ruthlessly exposed to world-market conditions? Why should these conditions be any less subject to social controls than labor conditions at home? The history of labor everywhere is a history of self-protection against the dictates of unfettered markets, including labor markets that are now, as it were, also internationalized. We deceive ourselves if we believe that American labor can safeguard its working conditions and living standards by increasing its human capital. That it should improve its skills, participate in decisions affecting work, press for a more humane work organization—these objectives are indispensable, I believe, if workers are to preserve their integrity as human beings. But jobs and wages can be protected only through such political measures as import quotas, controls on capital outflows, and foreign-exchange restrictions.

Among arguments that will be fielded against foreign-trade controls will undoubtedly be that productivity improvement would be retarded when international competition is thus restrained. True, but steel, auto, and textile companies have failed for nearly 20 years to update their facilities, products, and management habits—notwithstanding intensifying foreign competition. They have directed available funds into more profitable, if not necessarily more productive, ventures.

REICH BRANDS THE COUNTERPOSING of free markets vs. central planning as a "false choice." He doesn't elaborate. But there is an issue here that can't be evaded. It is whether major structural changes, such as the decline of the auto and steel industries, should be left to decisions by corporations and to the workings of other uncontrolled market forces, or steered by social democratic planning and intervention. The use of the tax system to further certain economic goals—advocated by Reich to improve human capital—cannot substitute for such planning; at best, it can help to implement it.

In sum, Mr. Reich fails to make a convincing case. He overlooks the fact that the waste of human resources is deeply embedded in the business system and economic policy. He does not cite evidence for the extent of skill needs in industry. He does not explore the causes of dead-end labor and the remedies needed to eliminate it. And he places his trust in a corporate business system that has proven its inability to utilize human resources wisely. □

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Samuel Hux

Self-Election of the Elite

The idea—I think it's fairly common—that a profession of liberal or social democratic politics implies a profession of faith in the *innate* and *prior* goodness of human nature strikes me as a beggarly question. And so does its obverse, that a profound skepticism about the loveliness of human nature compels a conservative political faith. Nonetheless, the ideas carry polemical weight: applying one or the other, one can make one's opponent seem naive and oneself realistic, or oneself respectful of human nature and one's opponent insulting—with consequent denigration of the policies the other proposes.

We may live in a secular age, especially here in the States, where we've had no established church to give a definite stamp to social life, but only various competitors, mostly Protestant, and splintering even yet. But the older religious faiths nonetheless inform many unspoken assumptions and even spoken rhetoric. It's difficult, for instance, to speak of innate goodness without thinking of the phrase "innate depravity." And Calvinism—which achieved its grandest philosophic expression in America—does seem to imply an attitude toward human nature that qualifies any political faith calling for the wider distribution of political power and economic reward among a population, instead of keeping power and reward in the hands of those relative few of inspired condition. How else could the doctrines of Election and Damnation be translated into political terms?

Well . . . in quite other ways, it seems to me!

What follows is not intended only for readers interested in Calvinism, but readers open to seeing how much of the cultural heritage of the West fails to translate into political imperatives as it may seem plausible that it would.

THE RICHEST, SUBTLEST, and most rewarding thinker ever to grace America, William James just possibly excepted, was Jonathan Edwards. It's often thought unfortunate that the reading public knows him primarily through his sermon *Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God*, instead of the kindlier mood of *A Treatise Concerning Religious Affections* or *Dissertation Concerning the End for which God Created the World*, which show him as psychologist and metaphysician, or *Images or Shadows of Divine Things*, brief poetic essays in analogy. But the poet is revealed in *Sinners* . . . as well: "The bow of God's wrath is bent, and the arrow made ready on the string, and justice bends the arrow at your heart, and strains the bow, and it is nothing but the mere pleasure of God, and that of an angry God, without any promise or obligation at all, that keeps the arrow one moment from being made drunk with your blood." I cannot think it unfortunate if the popularity or notoriety of this sermon reminds us that at the bottom of Edwards's thought is an image of man as a poor forked thing, life as a terrifying trial, and the chance of something graceful being done with it as hedged by risk and uncertainty.

But the work of Edwards that here concerns me most is his posthumously published *The Nature of True Virtue* (1765), the leading statement of his moral philosophy.

An approbation of justice in human dealings is indisputably a fine thing. But, as Edwards argues, it is no evidence in itself of True Virtue, because there is no benevolence necessarily involved. What functions instead is a conventional sense of symmetry not different in kind from what leads us to appreciate proportion in physical things. A man does ill, and has ill done to him; or a man "promotes the good of another [and] has his good promoted by the other." An observer can appreciate "some natural agreement of one thing to another; some adaptedness of the agent to the object; some answerableness of the act to the occasion; some equality and proportion in things of a similar nature."

A man may do ill to another and suffer pangs of conscience. But this again is no evidence of True Virtue, no mark of an innate moral sense. It is a

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matter of "natural conscience," as Edwards calls it, which is a disposition against being inconsistent with *oneself*, such inconsistency occurring when one treats another a way he would not want to be treated himself, or demands from another a behavior he would not be willing to practice himself.

Love and consideration of one's partner or one's children is clearly admirable. But in itself it is no evidence of True Virtue. This inclination is also a "natural instinct" implanted by the "Author of Nature" for "the preservation or continuation of the world of mankind." Nor is pity for the suffering of a fellow necessarily Truly Virtuous, being another natural instinct implanted for the same purpose. And in fact pity "may consist with true malevolence," as when a person hates another and wishes him ill, but his hatred not being infinite, he begins to pity the other when the other is "in misery far beyond his ill will."

The principles of conduct behind these selective and representative examples, Kant (who wrote his *Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and Sublime* about the same time) would have called "adoptive virtues." Such virtues although praiseworthy and even beautiful are not sublime ("True virtue alone is sublime"), because while they may accord with true virtue they do so only incidentally and indeed may—as Edwards's example of pity suggests—"conflict with the general rules of virtue." If a person feels sympathy for a particular fellow *because* of that particular fellow, the virtue is "adoptive." If he feels sympathy for the particular because he has a universal sympathy, the virtue is "true." This is what Edwards too means by the phrase.

Acts or feelings motivated by sense of proportion, by natural conscience, or by natural instinct are actuated in various degrees by self-love or self-interest. But True Virtue is absolutely benevolent. It has only incidentally to do with a particular other or with any benefits accruing to the self, except insofar as the other is a part of the all toward which the Truly Virtuous is well disposed. True Virtue is "*benevolence to being in general* . . . that consent, propensity and union of heart to being in general"; it "must chiefly consist in *love to God*, the Being of beings"; it is the excellency that "is in the sacred scriptures called by the name of light, knowledge, understanding." What Edwards calls "True Virtue" in *The Nature of True Virtue* he calls by other names in other works. But whatever he calls it, it is the possession only of the one who is *Elect*. In *A Divine and Supernatural Light* Edwards pursues the understanding of "a spiritual and divine light, immediately imparted to the soul by God, of a different nature from any that is obtained by natural means"—that is, not the natural instincts and conscience, but True Virtue, the gift of Grace. Adoptive virtues are meant to pale in comparison.

But may there not be a sense in which the adoptive virtues are *enough*?

A stable polity could be built upon their exercise. It's not an explicit consideration in Edwards's dissertation (he's not writing a *Politics*), but the pleasure he finds men taking in "a beauty of order in society" is the work of just such a sense of proportion. The self-love inherent in those natural instincts for human preservation and the self-union inherent in that natural conscience for personal consistency obviously have a social function. The self-love of natural man is a mark of his fallenness, but a social polity, even a just one, does not depend upon an innate benevolence. Edwards was in part speaking to the philosophers of the Scottish Enlightenment, like Francis Hutcheson, who argued, in *An Inquiry into the Original of Our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue*, for a native sense of communal benevolence. Edwards admired Hutcheson, but not to the point of saying that the rare gift of a few was the innate propensity of all. In an earthly kingdom, men have to make do with the natural capacities of the majority of mankind, and trust the apparent concern for others that is actually a reflected solicitude for one's own pains and pleasures.

Nature. Natural conscience. *Natural* instincts. It's well to remind ourselves what "natural" meant to the Calvinist Edwards: the state of the man who is not Elect. The state of the Damned. And all those adoptive virtues that Edwards approves, while finding them to fall short of True Virtue, inform the social psychology of the *Damned*—although he's kind enough not to put it that way. True Virtue belongs only to the Elect, God's chosen, the minuscule number seized by Grace.

Now, considering all this, Edwards's treatise may seem after all a remarkable gesture of benevolence! This unrelenting Calvinist, who believed, if the famous sermon is anything to go by, that God despised the non-Elect, nevertheless could perform the act of True Virtue that *The Nature of True Virtue* is, and *give to the Damned the credit for the greater part of the moral action of the world.*

Read Calvin, and then read Edwards. It is the difference between an icy moralism relieved only by the technical requirements of Christian mercy, and a warmth deriving from sympathetic closeness to those who will feel the flames, or, as Robert Lowell put it in his magnificent poem on Edwards, those whose souls "full of burning . . . will whistle on a brick."

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TRUE VIRTUE, disinterested benevolence to being in general, cannot be understood simply as a high, transcendent mode of the ethical. If one treats one's neighbor with respect and sympathy because one is Graced with respect and sympathy toward being in general, it is the latter disposition that marks one as Truly Virtuous, not the specific act, which could be performed from lesser motives, the adoptive virtues. This point is essential. For Edwards *put ethics in its place*—a high place, yes, but not so difficult to climb to. It's as if Edwards had said: Let us be truthful, see what we have, and judge what is required. There is nothing so mysterious, so defiant of human comprehension, about right action. The common sense that belongs to the self you love so dearly can tell you that if you steal you are liable to be stolen from, and be left no grounds for objecting. It may be hard for you to control your greed and aggression; but that it is to your advantage to do so, and to applaud the other for doing so, is easily within your mental grasp. You may be cursed with depravity; you are also blessed with reason and some instincts of preservation. I (says Edwards) do not pretend that social comity is easy—I of all people, who have preached man's distance from the angelic—but I note a certain intellectual clarity of alternatives.

Well, few of us are Calvinists today, but many fragments of Calvinist doctrine lie submerged in the assumptions and rhetoric of many of us all the same. One doesn't have to profess Calvinism to ponder the cogency of the words *Damned* and *Elect* —for in some fundamental way they are right. Most of us are not inspired people—whether *inspiration* is read as a religious state of being or as some secular quality of moral and aesthetic excellence. The inspired among us are as few as the Elect in Edwards's reckoning, in which "of so vast and innumerable a multitude of blossoms that appear on a tree, so few come to ripe fruit . . . but one in a great multitude ever bringing forth anything" (*Images or Shadows* . . .). I can imagine someone protesting, as I would: Does the present writer think that *he* is one of the Inspired? I sincerely don't think that I am. But that's no adequate answer; for if I did I'd probably for diplomatic reasons not wish to admit I did. So one will have to judge the author's argument, not guess at his possible delusions. But I recognize the justice of suspicion here—so universal is the habit of "self-election."

When Calvin proposed in his *Institutio Christianae Religionis* that among those to whom God assigns Election there are a few to whom he "assigns it in such a manner that the certainty of the effect is liable to no suspense or doubt," one cannot help thinking that his proposition was really a self-interested self-compliment. And it seems to me there are many among us who think their own inspired state, their election so to speak, "is liable to no suspense or doubt." They tend to be people of economic means, social position, or mental capacities beyond the average. I am reminded of Edwards's caveat in *A Divine and Supernatural Light* that special condition knows no distinctions of rank and intellect, may belong to "persons of mean capacities and advantages, as well as those that are of the greatest parts and learning." It's too easy to forget (as Calvinists often did forget) that Calvinism is not a *class* doctrine.

Not a class doctrine—and, as a matter of fact, of remarkably little political significance, in spite of the fact that "Elect" and "Damned" in a secular context do have a suspiciously political sound, the first especially. For you don't say "to elect" in Basel, where Calvin wrote his *Institutio*, or in Geneva, where he ruled, but "*élire*"—from which we get "*élite*."

That's an icy word as adapted into English, "elite." It's the possession of the self-assured, those as alien to humility as Calvin was when he overruled his own Augustinian doctrine (as the better Calvinist Edwards didn't) that the mystery of Election and Damnation took place in God's "secret counsel" and supposed himself privy to the divine knowledge. Such self-assurance, self-election, is rarely conducive to respect for others whom one suspects to be of a lesser condition. I haven't any doubt that Edwards assumed himself Elect, but he didn't give up as easily as Calvin did what a Catholic scholar has called "Augustine's agnosticism about the souls of others," and thus could manage some humility and sympathy. But in any case, Elite and Elect have no relation beyond the coincidences of etymology.

Elites have ruled us in politics as often as in fashion. But the Elect never has (although Plato wished it). *Elite* is always plural, a collective phenomenon. *Elect* implies the singular, as does *Inspired*. (The religious term is so much the more elegant; allow me to appropriate it even in a secular context.) The Elite are visible and obvious, possessing whatever qualities a society admires and likes to reward, or possessing whatever power a society will heel to. The Elect tends to be invisible, for his virtues are not so cashable. Elites choose, or are allowed to choose, themselves. The Elect is chosen by no one: he simply is. Elitism is a compromise between autocratic impulses and the reality of

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Leon Fink

The Leader as a Man

EUGENE V. DEBS, CITIZEN AND SOCIALIST, by Nick Salvatore. Part of the series The Working Class in American History. Champaign: University of Illinois Press. 452 pp. $24.95.

In 1949 Ray Ginger published a remarkable book, *The Bending Cross*, subsequently retitled *Eugene V. Debs: A Biography* (Collier Books, Macmillan, 1962). For more than 30 years Ginger's lively prose stood as the best available introduction not only to the career of America's greatest socialist but to the exciting years when radical, even revolutionary hopes about American life first swelled, then foundered. As historical styles and research methods changed, Ginger's *Debs* inevitably came to appear a bit old-fashioned. A dramatic and openly adulatory narrative raised appreciation of Debs without really explaining him. The heroic dimensions of the career of the conservative locomotive firemen's leader, who later took on the U.S. government in the Pullman strike, then served five times as presidential candidate of the Socialist party, paying twice with prison sentences for some of his efforts, were clearly shown. So, too, were the small-town gestures, the fun-loving, optimistic mannerisms that made the radicalism of this native son of Terre Haute, Indiana, so much more a part of turn-of-the-century Americana than the lectures of his more starched comrades.

What was less clear was exactly how, when, and why Debs made his long political journey. Out of what social and intellectual fabric did Debs's labor radicalism and later political socialism emerge? What message accounted for his special following? What resources, personal and political, sustained him against the fury of corporate authority and the tumult within socialist ranks? Finally, how does one account for the lapses of leadership, the consistent indecision—in short, the weaknesses as well as strengths of this legendary "father" of the socialist movement in America?

By addressing these riddles, Nick Salvatore proves himself a worthy successor to Ginger as a Debs scholar. Salvatore's *Eugene V. Debs, Citizen and Socialist,* (winner of the 1983 Bancroft Prize in American History) takes advantage both of new evidence and new perspectives to present a more complicated historical figure than we had previously known. Still very much an admiring portrait, Salvatore's Debs is less masterful than Ginger's. In the more recent treatment Debs's bold political initiatives and stirring eloquence are convincingly set off against a backdrop of ideological ambivalence, tactical confusion, and personal self-doubt. The publicly serene, confident leader here betrays the inner struggle behind his rocklike political faith. This new Debs is no less lovable but sadder, more mortal than the earlier one.

Salvatore draws on two talents in particular to open his subject in an engaging way. The first is a sure grasp of recent social history to create what the author labels a "social biography," or the integration of the subject's life with his cultural and social context. The changing face of the ambitious 19th-century town of Terre Haute and its impact on the dreams of the young Debs are skillfully depicted. The altered social relationships accompanying the rise of capitalist industry, particularly the crystallization of a new local business elite, take on a flesh-and-blood vitality. To be sure, the effectiveness of the book's social-historical dimension fades as Debs moves out at the turn of the century onto a murkier, national social plane, as head of a movement contending with—and generated from—numerous discrete social circumstances. Even a social biography cannot expect to provide a sufficient handle on the overall experience of American socialism, although this one goes about as far as a biography could.

The second skill is a use of the tools of intellectual history. Through supple and serious attention

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to the texts of Debs's voluminous speeches and writings, Salvatore leads us on an unbroken path from the thoughts of the boy paint-scraper seeking the main chance on the Vandalia Railroad to the Democratic politician and craft-union official, and then to the American Railway Union's experiment in industrial unionism. Salvatore records, with careful attention, the evolution of Socialist party policy—including Debs's fights, first with the Milwaukee "slowcialists" on matters of labor organization, then with such Wobblies as Big Bill Haywood over industrial violence, later with American "patriots" over what degree of resistance to take on World War I, and finally his fights with both the left and right of the movement following the Bolshevik revolution.

Across the spectrum of Debs's political permutations, Salvatore discovers an irreducible core of concerns with which Debs grappled all his adult life. The theme may be summarized as a quest for personal autonomy befitting citizens of the American republic. Debs's own words reveal this thread of continuity in his thinking or, to put it as Salvatore sees it, the ways that traditional values give rise to new political solutions.

FIRST, THE EARLY DEBS. Eugene was born in 1855, the first son of "mixed" Protestant-Catholic immigrant parents, who had fled familial intolerance in their native Alsace and after an initial struggle established a successful family grocery in Terre Haute. More influential on the young Debs than the works of the French *philosophes* and romantics that his father read to him (Eugene Victor Debs was named after Eugène Sue and Victor Hugo), it seems, was the entrepreneurial spirit and success literature that circulated in Terre Haute.

After one year of high school Debs left academia, captivated by visions of worldly success, quickly advancing from paint-scraper to regular fireman on William Riley McKeen's Vandalia Railroad, all the while attending business school at night. To his parents' worries about the dangers of railroad work, 19-year-old Eugene would reply that "I only want to stay long . . . to prove that I can act manly when [I] must be." Soon he left the railroad to become an accounting clerk at Herman Hulman's wholesale grocery. Active in the town's debating society and cultural life, a Democrat in politics, and a model employee complimented by both McKeen and Hulman, Eugene (for reasons still not entirely clear) also threw his energies into organizing a local lodge of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen (BLF). Following the shakeup of the union after the 1877 railroad strikes, Debs's organizational and persuasive skills were recognized in his appointment as BLF national secretary-treasurer and editor of the brotherhood's magazine.

In his first ten years with the union Debs was an articulate advocate of a most conservative brand of craft unionism. Disdaining not only the violence of 1877 but also the implicit class formation represented by the Knights of Labor, and ignoring even the pre-AFL moves toward craft-union confederation, Debs happily accepted a narrow definition of the BLF's aims of "Benevolence, Sobriety, and Industry." In Terre Haute Debs was accepted as a trustworthy social broker for consolidating industrialists such as McKeen, who personally bailed out the BLF at a moment of financial exigency. With support from both workingmen and the town's "best people," Debs, preaching self-help and a social community of interest, twice was elected city clerk before advancing in 1884 to the state legislature. A thoroughly respectable social trajectory seemed sealed in 1885 with his marriage to Katherine Metzel, the status-conscious daughter of a wealthy drugstore owner.

If the first decade of Debs's career describes an ambitious man well adapted to the Gilded Age, the next reveals the radical underside of the small-producer republicanism to which Debs and many of his fellow citizens had long subscribed. The spreading confrontations of the national railroad corporations with the railway brotherhoods and the Knights of Labor, highlighted by the Southwest strike of 1886 and the Burlington and Quincy strike of 1888–89, forced Debs and other brotherhood leaders into a position of more militant, if still selective, resistance to the anti-union initiatives from above. When in 1886 the Pennsylvania Railroad, for example, substituted its own relief agency for the mutualism of the brotherhoods, Debs spotted a threat to the "absolute independence" of the workingmen.

While still opposing boycotts, his defense of citizenship rights and "manliness" of character allowed Debs to subtly adapt his old message of harmony to a new age of industrial conflict. After employer intransigence, governmental injunctions, and quarreling amongst the railroad unions had humiliated the BLF in the Burlington strike, labor solidarity alone—it now appeared to him—could spare America from a future in which "the dollar is to be everything, the corporation is to rule, and workingmen, with their faces in the dust, are to serve." "The strike," Debs proclaimed in 1888, "is the weapon of the oppressed. . . . The Nation had for its cornerstone a strike."

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Caught between older habits and new problems, Debs by 1890 was "a confused and confusing labor leader." On the one hand he sought in vain for cooperation among the self-protective railway brotherhoods in the face of corporate attack. On the other hand he had little sympathy with rank-and-file movements, opposed populism as well as socialism, and still reflected the craft unionists' antipathy for the black and the new immigrant worker.

Not until he broke permanently with the BLF and chartered the American Railway Union (ARU) on an industrial unionist model open to all did Debs signal a clear direction. Now openly aligning himself with the politics of the Knights of Labor and the Populist party—the mainstream of late-19th-century radical republicanism to which Debs was a latecomer—the ARU leader met his first federal injunction with a simple resolve: "The issue is upon us and I am in favor of forcing, not evading, it. The time has come when we shall know whether this is a republic or a despotism." The overturning of the injunction, followed by a smashing victory over James J. Hill's Great Northern Railroad, brought the ARU 150,000 members and the attention of the entire country. Such early success, however, also set up the union for the kill at the hands of employers united with an itchy U.S. attorney general in the Pullman strike and boycott in 1894. Not the baptism by fire into socialism that Debs would later claim for the event (he offered his enthusiastic backing to Bryan's free-silver candidacy as late as 1896), the Pullman defeat and Debs's subsequent sentence to Woodstock prison touched off a desperate search for alternative social-political solutions.

While respective embrace of the Populist ballot, utopian cooperation, and finally, political socialism etched a path of further radical ideological development in the post-Pullman period, Salvatore shrewdly notes that they also marked a flight from tangible workers' struggles and organizing strategies, a weakness that would continually bedevil Debs's "mature" socialist years, and indeed the American socialist movement in general.

AS THE MOST POPULAR STANDARD-BEARER of the socialist movement and five-time presidential candidate from 1900 to 1920, Debs's greatest achievement lay in fusing the historical-cultural commitments of radical republicanism with the economic theory of the international socialist tradition. While borrowing a good deal of specific analysis from such leaders as Victor Berger, Morris Hillquit, and later Bill Haywood of the IWW, Debs placed his own characteristic stamp on things—a blend, in Salvatore's view, "far more appealing to Americans than any alternative at the time, or indeed since."

Ideologically. Debs was probably closest to J. A. Wayland and the *Appeal to Reason*'s "socialism as 20th-century American individualism." He clearly also was much influenced by the Christian social gospel of George Herron with its emphasis on the "struggle of man for the possession and direction of his own life, for that self-ownership which is the soil and substance of all liberty." While some of his contemporaries might worry that this "small-town" socialist appeal represented less a revolutionary understanding of capitalism than a primitive rage directed against an inevitably more integrated social order, Debs's ability to mix "Biblical appeal, democratic ideology, and growing class awareness" explained the "potency of his agitation." As late as his fateful 1918 antiwar and pro-Bolshevik speech delivered at Canton, Ohio, the "central issue" for Debs, as Salvatore expertly deciphers it, "revolved around the individual." "Join the Socialist Party," proclaimed the aging warrior soon to be incarcerated for a debilitating two and a half years in the Moundsville and Atlanta penitentiaries, "[then] you will know what it is to be a real man or woman. You will lose nothing but you will find something of infinite value, and that something will be yourself. And that is your supreme need, to find yourself—to really know yourself and your purpose in life."

Near the end of his life the quest for truth and self-knowledge of this avowedly secular radical took on overtly Christian overtones. His prison term became a "species of purging." Increasingly, a "concentric circle of suffering and redemption . . . structured Debs's core vision of the world." While, from his cell, Debs wrote of his "sacred melancholy," only one picture hung on his wall—of the crucified Christ. Only months before his death in 1926 Debs thanked "whatever gods there be" for "the darkest days [that] have brought me the most light." "I would not omit a single item from the record, nor blot out a single experience, but if I did I should wish it to be the most joyous one rather than the bitterest of them all." Only in these last years did the great public figure, seemingly so ebullient and full of good cheer and humor, openly admit his private pain.

It is only in coming to grips with the implications of Debs's private life that Salvatore seems analytically to shy away from his own evidence. He makes convincing connections between the ideological focus on autonomy and personal freedom and Debs's deep feelings of insecurity and dependence, most

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obvious in his relation to McKeen and later Victor Berger, and a factor in his frequent indisposition at moments of crucial political decisions. Other clues, however, appear in the narrative as isolated insights or mere ephemera. These include: Debs's physical and emotional distance from his wife, frequent drinking bouts, sentimentalization of his mother and emotional reliance on his younger brother Theodore, a furtive decade-long love for socialist-feminist Mabel Curry, and a series of crippling "collapses," variously laid to "lumbago," "rheumatism," "exposure and overexertion," calmed only by rest cures at sanitoriums or doses of morphine.

One does not need to reach back into Debs's unknown infancy to sense some psychological connection between these episodes. Together, Debs's physical ailments, difficulties in establishing or maintaining intimate relationships, and seeming need to escape from inner turmoil seem to add up to more of a personal crisis than Salvatore admits or is willing to pursue. It is interesting, for example, that after briefly alluding to the likely "emotional" base of Debs's "multiple illnesses," this social biography only dispatches the reader in a footnote to Haller and Haller's *The Physician and Sexuality in Victorian America* for the "social meaning" of these diseases.

Superficially, Debs's symptoms bear striking resemblance to that cluster of complaints that Victorian medicine might have diagnosed as neurasthenia or exhaustion of the nervous system, a kind of psychosomatic reaction, most often affecting "brainworkers" and especially women, to the pressures of modern life. This neurasthenia was often associated with concerns about sexual adequacy and identity that also seem to fit the subject here. Debs's frequent appeal to the ideal of "manliness," more than a simple incantation of the craftsman's code of ethics, represented a deeply felt division of human sentiments and activity along a gender-related divide. As with other Victorian men, women stood for Debs on a pedestal of beauty, moral virtue, and compassion, at once inspiring and intimidating. Ginger described the initial Kate-Eugene courtship as one where she had to take the initiative with the shy Debs; when he became a serious suitor, for example, he would think to present her only with a bound volume of the *Locomotive Firemen's Magazine*. Salvatore is probably right to attribute the distance in their marriage to the incessant emotional demands made on a more retiring woman, but the couple's inability to have children must surely have weighed on Debs, a lover of children, as well. Debs's one

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passionate relationship was, as Salvatore has discovered, with Mabel Curry, a feminist lecturer on the Chautauqua circuit and wife of a Terre Haute professor. In this friendship too, despite the necessary subterfuge in arranging visits and frequent "passionate avowals of love," Debs remained "physically and emotionally removed." For the boundaries that separated this deeply caring man from the sustenance of an intimate emotional and sexual relationship, Debs substituted drinking nights with male friends, visits to brothels, and the uncritical devotion of roaring crowds.

Such aspects of Debs's private character undoubtedly influenced his public career. This is true not only of his characteristic combination of bold rhetorical gesture and intellectual self-doubt. Salvatore recognizes the year 1885 as a turning point in Debs's thinking toward a sharper-edged republicanism allowing for social conflict. This same year saw a shift away from Riley McKeen as Debs's personal hero toward a revered image of his mother, a move that also seemed to deflect his conflict-ridden feelings for his new bride, Kate. Salvatore assimilates these "events" into "the complex change Debs experienced as the force and quickness of industrial capitalism deluged his culture." Surely, a more subtle explanation of ideological and personal development is called for here! The author does, however, more neatly suggest that at this crucial moment in his life Debs veered visibly away from (or at least complicated) a simple "masculine" success ethic, associated with both McKeen and his marriage, toward a deeper "feminine" emphasis on compassion and justice, which would ultimately flower as Debsian socialism. Does it belittle Debs's ideas and actions to recognize that in part his public strength offered an exit from private weakness, that the man who could profoundly touch the multitude withdrew into himself off the stump? Is it not rather a tribute to Debs's humanity that he continually sought personal solace in our common future?

Readers may now enjoy two fine biographies of Eugene V. Debs. One will still want to read Ginger for the image of the folk hero—for the moral grandeur of the man who could leave 2,300 federal inmates in joy and tears at his release, for understanding the easy camaraderie that linked the nation's foremost radical with the homespun Hoosier poet James Whitcomb Riley. Ginger's prose, too, remains superior in its capacity for illustrative detail, and metaphorical power:

> The gashes across his forehead had deepened. The crow's feet near his eyes met furrows rising from the corners of his mouth. His cheeks were concave. His jaw had come to resemble a giant bone pendulum, attached as an afterthought to a previously finished face.
>
> In all these [personal] qualities he [Debs] was more Midwestern than a worn and rotting plowhandle buried deep in the soil of a Kansas farm.

But one will want to read Nick Salvatore to understand the man behind the image and something of the world in which he traveled. If Salvatore has uncovered a man and political career more complicated and troubled than even the author would have preferred to relate, he has nevertheless helped considerably to bridge the gap between the 19th-century man of the people and the 20th-century radical struggling to understand the world and himself, determined to change both of them. □

Dennis Wrong

The Fine Art of "Draperizing"

PRESENT HISTORY: ON NUCLEAR WAR, DETENTE AND OTHER CONTROVERSIES, by Theodore Draper. New York: Random House. 458 pp. $19.95.

Theodore Draper contends that his title, though apparently an oxymoron, is meant to indicate the intermediate status of his essays between journalism, which deals with immediate events, and traditional history, which waits to assess them until they have indisputably acquired an aura of "pastness." Draper wants to bring both historical perspective and careful documentation from primary sources to bear upon "subjects of the greatest urgency and controversy while they [are] still urgent and controversial."

The subjects dealt with in the present collection are undeniably the most urgent concerns of American foreign policy since about 1965, most of which, unfortunately, cannot yet be treated as finished stories providing grist for the long-range historian. They include debates over nuclear strategy, the condition of the Western alliance (or "mésalliance," as Draper would have it), the "ghosts of Vietnam," détente and Kissinger's diplomacy, the

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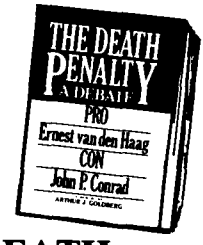
Arab-Israeli wars, and the recently influential neoconservative views on foreign policy of Norman Podhoretz and Jeane Kirkpatrick. Each of these is the subject of from one to four essays—16 essays in all. There is also a final section that goes back much further into the past to explore the prescient views of earlier thinkers, including de Tocqueville, on future Russian-American relations as well as a discussion of continuing ambiguities in the role of intellectuals in politics.

All of the essays were first published between 1973 and 1982. Two of the longer ones, on Vietnam and on the first volume of Kissinger's memoirs, appeared in *Dissent*. All the others, except one, were originally printed in the *New York Review of Books*, *Commentary*, *Encounter*, the *New Republic* and the *New York Times Book Review*. The single exception is a long analysis—over 60 pages—of the present disarray of the Western alliance, which first appeared two years ago in the *Washington Quarterly*. It records the changes in world politics since the NATO treaty was signed, changes that have made the alliance "obsolescent" in its basic assumption of American strength and European weakness. Draper recounts in detail de Gaulle's initial challenge to the alliance leading to the present "neo-Gaullism" of Germany as well as France, the structural economic changes resulting from European recovery, and the new strategic balance created by the Soviet arms buildup since the 1960s. The alliance "was, even in its heyday, a unilateral military guarantee more than a true alliance." This makes no sense at all today when the "decisive weapons" in the "war of attrition" with the Soviet Union are "political, economic, social and cultural, not the missiles of the apocalypse." Draper concludes: "A new Western front will be restored only when the isolation of the United States is seen as the greatest danger to Europe, and the estrangement from Europe is seen as the greatest danger to the United States."

This one essay apart, I shall take the liberty of assuming that most readers of *Dissent* will be broadly familiar with the contents of the others. I shall therefore limit myself to some general observations on the qualities of mind that Draper brings to bear on subjects he seeks to illuminate.

The verb "to Draperize" almost suggests itself. It means the subjection of a complicated issue to the kind of intensive, enormously detailed, and scrupulously researched analysis exhibited in these essays and in Draper's earlier books. Draper is too modest in calling what he does "present history," which he distinguishes from "contemporary history," and in speaking of his work in the same breath with journalism. Not that I want to depreciate journalism, which is always necessary and whose best practitioners are often people of intellectual stature. But Draper's methods, if not his subjects, are closer to those of the most rigorous scholarly historians in their nearly total reliance on public documentation. *Sitzfleisch* rather than legwork or interviewing skills is Draper's major resource and no less an historian than Jack Hexter in his *Doing History* has insisted that *Sitzfleisch* is the one truly indispensable attribute of the first-rate professional historian. One fully sympathizes with Draper when, reviewing Norman Podhoretz's tirade against the critics of the Vietnam war in whose ranks Podhoretz himself had been a far from obscure member, Draper wryly observes that "despite all the unpaid research I did for him, I earn Podhoretz's displeasure for having alluded to the war's 'shamefulness' and 'immoral conduct.' "

It is hard to imagine that future historians, though they will, of course, know the eventual outcome and the wider context, will improve upon Draper's account of a number of matters, such as the confusing and confused policy recommendations of the Reagan administration on nuclear strategy (which drew a reply from Caspar Weinberger himself), or the exact sequence of events



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preceding the Egyptian attack on Israel in the Yom Kippur War. Draper's range is extraordinary. His two books on American communism were traditionally historical, though drawing on his personal contacts with veteran American Communists. (He also did a lot of "unpaid research" for the producers of *Reds*.) His later books have dealt with ideologically freighted issues: the Cuban Revolution, the ideology of Castroism, the "abuse of power" that involved the United States in the Vietnam War, the Six-Day Arab-Israeli War, U.S. intervention in the Dominican Republic, and the revival of American black nationalism in the 1960s.

Draper's breadth owes much to the fact that he has not spent most of his life hanging around universities. Few professors would have had the gumption to tackle his diversity of subjects. Nor, despite the meticulousness of his research methods, does he shrink from clear-cut judgments out of fear of being thought too "controversial" or enslavement to what C. Wright Mills called "the methodological inhibition." I wrote "despite" his methods, but I might as well have said "because of" them, for Draper's opinions are always grounded in analysis of the facts and this rather than cocksureness accounts for the confidence with which he expresses them. Also, for his impatience with moral posturing and ideological cant—one sometimes has the impression that "fatuous" is his favorite adjective applied even-handedly to leftist sentimentality and neoconservative bluster.

DRAPER'S GENERAL POINT OF VIEW might be described as "humane realism." He often seems to me to be an American counterpart of such men as Richard Lowenthal, Walter Laqueur, and his friend the late George Lichtheim—one who started out in the '30s on the left, became quickly disillusioned by Stalinist duplicity, but never surrendered to the temptation of making anticommunism or even antitotalitarianism into an all-embracing counterideology, choosing instead to become an analyst of world events, a defender of democracy, warts and all, skeptical of the pretensions of statesmen without ever succumbing to cynicism or tough-guy *Realpolitik* attitudinizing.

I worry about where and how we will find successors to such men who are the finely distilled products of the disasters of 20th-century politics. Their loss would, of course, be a small price to pay to avoid the repetition of such disasters, but the very intelligence they so amply possess remains a major resource in protecting us against such a repetition. □

Murray Hausknecht

And Now the Good News

AMERICA'S QUEST FOR THE IDEAL SELF: DISSENT AND FULFILLMENT IN THE 60S AND 70S, by Peter Clecak. New York: Oxford University Press. 325 pp. $27.50

The 1970s have a bad name—the "me decade," a narcissistic time in which authority declined. The decade's bleakness stands in contrast to the '60s when the Movement and the New Left seemed to promise the dawn of a new day in the country's political and social life. Even for those radicals and liberals who have reservations about the '60s, the decade represents a peak from which the society has slid precipitously into the slough of the '70s.

According to Peter Clecak even the neoconservatives whose influence grew in the '70s find it an unattractive time. Their "commitment to the ideas of order and stability and a hostility to the culture of modernism" as well as a "nostalgic preference for the bourgeois ethic" make the late '50s "their moment of greatest psychic ease." Clecak's latest book is a vigorously argued dissent from this consensus. His project is to read our recent history in a different way.

The conventional wisdom overlooks the central fact that the heart of the political and cultural upheavals of those years was the quest for personal fulfillment that has run through American culture from its inception. The quest has "quasi-religious" overtones; it is fundamentally a search for salvation rooted in the society's religious traditions. To be sure, the religious dimension is not always apparent; nevertheless, "the Judeo-Christian metaphor of salvation informed the personal searches of Pentacostal Christians and adherents of Arthur Janov's primal therapy, of mainline Protestants, of devotees of *est*, and of many political and cultural radicals." Uniting these diverse populations, which also include "joggers, health food enthusiasts, human potential advocates, and . . . environmentalists," was a search for "the abundant life . . . an individual's opportunity to define and enact possibilities of feeling and mind as freely and as fully as possible." Thus, without minimizing their political importance, the movements of the '60s are "better understood as a manifestation of the many-sided quest for self-fulfillment."

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The other side of the coin of personal salvation was a commitment to "the idea of social justice." Those searching for the abundant life demanded an increase in liberty for others as well as themselves. Self-fulfillment requires a "slice of social justice," and in the '60s and the '70s this entailed an assault on the "structure of disadvantage," that is, the inequalities of class as well as "the dominant cultural images and imperatives that hamper citizens in their quest for self-fulfillment."

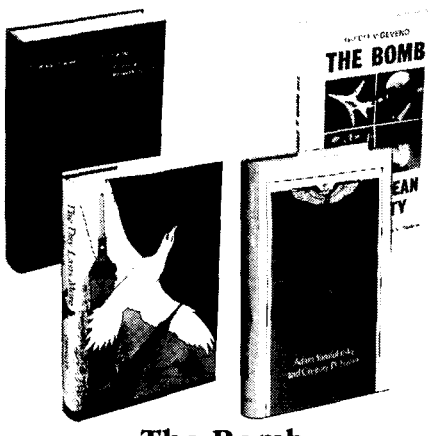
All those who fell short of the controlling images began to move against the structure of disadvantage with significant gains being made by, among others, racial and ethnic groups, women, homosexuals, and the physically handicapped. There was, in short, "a proliferation of dissent" that took a variety of forms but with two main targets. One was "industrial civilization, including science, technology, and the institution of capitalism," and the other was "the dominant WASP culture" with its "standards of beauty, taste, morality, leisure, success, work, and sex."

Dissent and the quest for fulfillment were a kind of "culture storm" that changed the landscape of American life, in some cases permanently. At one level, for example, "large numbers of citizens acquired the habit of dissent or at least exercised it with increasing frequency." (Incidentally, Clecak, unlike one "leftist" reviewer of his book, recognizes that valuing dissent and democracy means being prepared to hear from the Jerry Falwells of the world as well as from one's own kind.) At another level, traditional expectations were reshaped as in the instance of gender roles.

In summary, the political and cultural storms of the '60s and the '70s left behind a "progressive democratization of personhood in America . . . dissent and protest energized a largely irreversible, interactive pattern of cultural and political shifts that established fresh opportunities and fresh perils for self-definition and self-fulfillment." Not everyone gained nor did everyone make equal gains. Still, in spite of trials and defeats that plagued every individual

> and group . . . life for many Americans within each disadvantaged category, from blacks and women to gays and handicapped, was more various, more full of possibility at the end of the seventies than it had been in the quieter, more stable middle fifties.

BUT WHAT, THEN, of selfishness, narcissism, and the decline of authority? Are critics of American society and culture wrong in detecting the rise of "psychological man" (Philip Rieff), a person succumbing to the lure of "hedonism" (Daniel Bell),



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someone best described as a "narcissistic personality" (Christopher Lasch)? Clecak readily concedes the existence of these patterns. But the critics "have tended to overstress and frequently to exaggerate what strikes me as side-effects of the quest. . . ." These effects have appeared because "ideas of fulfillment grew more rapidly than opportunities for fulfillment" and, therefore, "assertions of supremacy of the self and the irrelevance of all modes of authority usually constituted unfulfilling versions of fulfillment."

Clecak argues that the critics assume that the "extremes" of behavior and thought are the dominant patterns without showing that this is so. Bell, for example, deploring the state of religion in America, emphasizes the antimodernist, politically reactionary components of Christian fundamentalism and "fails utterly to take account of the rich *religious* character of the experience of salvation reported in countless formal and informal sources." Sometimes Bell's cultural conservatism, Clecak continues, leads him into conflict with his political liberalism. Bell warns against the dangers of a too passionate politics "that invites violent conflict and even civil war." But, Clecak responds, could the causes of the '60s and the '70s "have succeeded so far as they have without passionate expressions of social anger, without a willingness to violate rules and disrupt routines?"

In Clecak's estimation, Bell shows more appreciation of the complexities and ambiguities of social reality than does Lasch. The latter's work, although "full of intriguing insights . . . almost seems calculated to . . . persuade sympathetic readers of the futility of any collective action short of an unlikely socialist revolution." Lasch can convert every "hopeful facet of American culture and politics" into mere "illusion." The assumption that the narcissistic personality is the basic contemporary character structure "permits Lasch privileged insight into American minds and offers a way to explain without recourse to mere evidence why *they* routinely neglect *his* form of salvation." Lasch has "confused . . . peculiar excesses with the norm." He resolutely ignores the "variegated patterns of normality" that continue to exist in American society between the extremes of the classical Freudian neuroses of the 19th century and today's "pathological narcissism."

Clecak agrees with Lasch that in many respects American culture today is lacking, compared to its past. In brief, "the bourgeois ideal of leisurely, gracious living has neither survived well among the very privileged nor spread throughout the society." But for most Americans the past was *not* a time of greater justice or greater opportunities for self-fulfillment. Today's "regrettable changes . . . are side effects of the democratization of personhood, consequences of rising expectations and rising satisfaction among a growing number of citizens in all social categories."

IT IS HARD TO DISCERN from inside a social whirlwind what is central and what is peripheral, what is symbolically significant and what of minor importance; the odds on getting it right are not very good. One can quarrel with Clecak in some of the same terms he quarrels with Bell or Lasch. Clecak is at great pains to note the "extremes" that the quest for salvation can take. "In *Holistic Running* . . . for example, Joel Henning declares that running is 'indeed a form of worship, an attempt to find God, a means to the transcendent.' " Such extreme versions of the quest for salvation through therapy are "atypical" but "reveal in distorted forms the basic impulses of the quest." Well, perhaps holistic running and primal screaming are aspects of the search for transcendence; what is certainly *not* clear is that they are merely "side-effects" rather than symbolic of the pervasiveness of narcissism.

On the other hand, Clecak has hold of at least one significant point that other critics have ignored, and it makes his work necessary reading. He is entirely right when he says that the civil rights movement, the antiwar movement, the counterculture, and the women's movement served the interests of justice and "the democratization of personhood." For a black American, for example, it was harder 35 years ago to attain and maintain the inner certainty of his worth as a person than it is today. Similarly, an "American woman" today is a different person from what she was 20 years ago. For liberals and radicals such developments, and these are but the most obvious ones, are welcome changes, and not to be deprecated as insignificant or as aspects of "mere reformism."

Still, even among liberals and radicals there is a tendency to resist a view like Clecak's (witness the ambivalence lurking in the title of this review), and not always because one is unpersuaded by the reasonableness of the argument or the adequacy of the evidence. Our will and determination to continue the battle for equality and social justice are sapped when we contemplate, for example, the disparities of wealth and income between blacks and whites and how many barriers to "equal opportunity" still remain, or when we reflect on the failure of ERA. Is this, plus Ronald Reagan, all we have to show for the energies and passions we invested in the movements of the '60s and the '70s?

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Add a heightened consciousness of how inadequate our knowledge seems to be to the tasks ahead and the seeming exhaustion of the radical imagination—the temptation, then, to lapse into apathy and indifference becomes a strong one. Critics such as Lasch, to say nothing of the neoconservatives, provide us with respectable rationales for inaction. Clecak reminds us that in the '70s, as in the '60s, we were not wasting our political lives; the movements of those years "made a difference." And by reminding us of what was accomplished in the past, he makes it harder to bear with equanimity or good conscience any present inaction. □

James B. Rule

Vietnam Revisited

TIM PAGE'S NAM, by Tim Page. Introduction by William Shawcross. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 119 pp. $14.95, paperback.

America has an orgy of emotional reckoning still to come over its involvement in Vietnam. The eight or so years we spent tearing that country to pieces wrought commensurate destruction to our own shared cultural and emotional life. When America finally quit Vietnam, we closed that country out of our thoughts in guilty haste. At some point, a confrontation with the responsibilities for our actions there awaits us.

This book—basically a selection of riveting, journalistic war photos, strung together with brief commentary by the photographer—brings us no closer to this reckoning. But without intending to, it does help to show how the deliberate, sustained American role in Vietnam's destruction was possible.

Page began his career in photojournalism covering smaller wars in Indochina, until he found his main chance in Vietnam. There, according to the introduction by William Shawcross, he quickly established himself as one of the most productive and successful free-lancers, and certainly one of the most reckless. High on an endless cornucopia of drugs and intoxicated with war itself, Page went where other journalists never dared. Time-Life was one of the big buyers of his material; yet that sober bureaucracy apparently never wanted such a zany character on its regular staff.

Page's first wounds he treated as nothing more than a new kind of stimulant: "They fed me cognac and dope and cleaned out the shrapnel and I went right back the next day. Why not? I mean, it was like an itch, and this was the only way to scratch it. It's rock and roll, you know." The final wound was a long piece of shrapnel from a mine, driven into the base of his brain, leaving him largely paralyzed and taking him out of the war for good. "Time-Life paid all his medical bills," Shawcross notes, "and, after persuading him to sign a form releasing the corporation from any further responsibility for him, gave him a *pourboire* of $15,000."

Page , who is British, was officially a noncombatant and depicts himself as an opponent of the war. Yet it has to be said that he gloried in it—there is no other term:

> Sitting in the door gunner's seat in a Huey . . . watching those blue-green tracers of 12.7s hover toward you. . . . Groping for the 60's twin grip and feeding a belt through made me feel more useful. . . .
>
> . . . The late dusk extract from some precarious rock pile of a guaranteed miserable night, back to a marine-run press center of stateside T-bones, and Vodka Collins, gung-ho back-slapping, and then, at last, an opium solace.
>
> We still look up when one clatters overhead. I will always think that they make a great camera platform, but a better frame; the heart still flutters around them.

TIM PAGE'S PICTURES are brilliantly horrific. Many are faces—American and Asian—transformed by fear, revulsion, grief, or agony. The actual combat scenes remind one of blast furnaces or volcanoes—but these are infernos created to destroy human beings and their possessions.

Against his zest for the war experience, the author's reservations ring hollow and half-hearted:

> The Navy made sure you felt comfortable, clean, and wanted. . . . You got an escort, an assistant, a VIP officer's billed-hat, and a lot of respect. The perfect harmony of men and machines. Yet it was sad to think that many of them would never really understand the effect they were having ashore.

If the author ever felt more than these occasional pangs, it does not come through in this book.

The American juggernaut in Vietnam was not launched by men like Page, of course. The decision was taken by older, cultivated men, drawn from the elites of American government and intellectual

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life. But one comes to feel that what Page calls the "sexiness, the romance of power over life" was an essential ingredient of our participation. Without it, revulsion would surely have overtaken the whole enterprise long before it finally did. □

Emanuel Geltman

With the Coming of Darkness

MIDNIGHT IN THE CENTURY, by Victor Serge. Translated from the French by Richard Greeman. Illustrations by Vlady. London: Writers and Readers. Distributed in the U.S. by W. W. Norton. 242 pp. $12.95.

It helps to know something of the history of Russia under Stalin's despotism to appreciate this novel fully. Reading it is an unforgettable introduction to that history—desperate men and women trying to preserve their faith in socialism as the darkness closes in on them. *Midnight*, first published in France in 1939 and written in French, lacks the concentrated force of Victor Serge's *The Case of Comrade Tulayev* (a novel about the great purges, unfairly overshadowed by Arthur Koestler's *Darkness at Noon*). But it "fails" only in comparison with Serge's greatest work.

The story line is simple enough, though it has no "plot" in the ordinary sense. Serge draws on his own experience of 80 days in solitary confinement and his own two years in Siberian deportation after he was expelled from the Communist party as a Left Oppositionist (Trotskyist). Serge takes us into the puzzled, persecuted, despairing world of the Oppositionists, left and right, and of other "heretics"—pickpockets, religious believers—who share the same fate, skeptically, symbolically, because they have no illusions, nor do they care about regenerating the party or restoring power to the people.

The novel is peopled by characters whom Serge hardly had to imagine. Whether intellectuals versed in dialectical materialism or proletarians, loyal or disaffected party members, they are people, "types" Serge would have known. Over them hangs the presence of real, nonfictional people and institutions, explained in a glossary.

The glossary helps. If the reader doesn't already know that the secretary general, "Iosif Vissarionovich," was Stalin, the book offers ample instruction. But the glossary is most useful for less familiar references. There is, for example, a point in the novel where several of the characters, living miserably, still loyal to the party, discuss the "Red Plebiscite" in Germany, in which the Communists joined the Nazis against the Socialists on the premise that, once rid of the "social-fascists," they would easily displace Hitler.

Germany is merely an overtone, but there is no mistaking that Midnight is coming elsewhere as well. The time is the early '30s—those years when prison, a filth-ridden "chaos," and deportation to work camps precede the executions of the great purges—and the crematoria—and Franco's conquest of Spain. Bewildered, but not yet willing to surrender all belief in the party, the characters choose to believe, arguing, anyway, that the party must know what it's doing.

Grayness pervades the novel. A loaf of bread is a major concern; its disappearance a major crime, with punishment or "kindness" decreed by a fat security agent (who himself will ultimately, one is sure, take his turn in prison and deportation). But every so often, a delicately drawn passage pierces the gray-dark with a description of nature that can't be brutalized—the freshness of the night air, a bud coming to flower. Nowhere in the book is this more evident than in the last chapter, "The Beginning."

In his "Afterword," the translator instructs us in the various symbolisms of people and places. One of the characters, Rodion—half-educated, a "philosopher" seriously trying to understand Hegel so that he can better understand the dialectics of revolutionary life turned into oppression—escapes from a work camp. (So far as this reviewer knows, Oppositionists never escaped Stalin's camps and prisons, while revolutionaries had often accomplished this feat under the Czar.) Rodion swims a river, "drowns," just about, but is saved by a symbolic forest dweller, "Ivan Nobody," who lives by killing wolves and roasting them, himself virtually a beast, but one who can quote Pushkin and Shakespeare, even Hegel:

> You can take your comrades and shove 'em up your arse. What kind of comrade are you to me, you poor half-drowned fool? What makes you think it's not obvious you escaped from the camp? Which brigade were you in? The Yagoda Brigade? The Enthusiasts' Brigade? Triumphant Socialism? Screw the lot of

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them, citizen. If you don't want me to chuck your arse back in the water, you better not call me comrade. In this country, you'll learn there's no more anything: neither socialism, nor capitalism, bunch of syphilitic whores. There's only you and me, and if that makes one too many, the question will be easy to settle without consulting the masses.

Rodion makes his way upriver, to a town on the river bank, where he finds a job as a "free" laborer, a mason building . . . a headquarters for the security police, and still in Russia . . . and driven by a quota to match the competition of the prisoners' brigade, working on the same project! He meets a fellow worker, a woman who shares her brandy with him.

> "Listen," he said softly, "do you know what we are? Have you ever thought about it?" She considered him with astonishment. And her direct iron-blue gaze was tinged with fear.

End of story and book.

WHO WAS VICTOR SERGE? A revolutionary tainted with libertarian notions, a writer of some 20 books (fiction and nonfiction) who mounted the barricades and recreated history in his works, loyal to his own vision to the very end, when he was living from hand to mouth in Mexico. Born in Belgium of revolutionary parents who had fled Russia, he spent five years in French jails, 1911–17 (about which he wrote *Men in Prison*, published in France in 1930); joined the Bolsheviks; was active in the Revolution; helped found the Communist International; was a friend of Russian writers who in the early years were allowed the freedom to experiment. Was then expelled for Trotskyism; jailed, deported, but finally allowed to leave for France. There he worked in printshops, wrote, barely survived—and was jailed for a time. The Spanish Civil War spoke to him, above all as a partisan of the POUM (the anti-Stalinist left socialists, many of whom were killed by the Stalinists). *Midnight* is addressed —

> To the memory of Kurt Landau, Andrés Nin, Erwin Wolf, who disappeared in Barcelona and whose very death was stolen from us, to Joaquin Maurin, in a Spanish prison, to Juan Andrade, Julian Gorkin, Katia Landau, Olga Nin, and through them to all whose valor they incarnate, I dedicate these messages from their brothers in Russia.

With the coming of World War II, Serge managed to get out of France and go to Mexico. In Mexican exile, he met Trotsky's widow, Natalia, and wrote in his diary —

> [We] are the sole survivors of the Russian Revolution here and perhaps anywhere in the world. . . . There is nobody left who knows what the Russian Revolution was really like, what the Bolsheviks were really like—and men judge without knowing, with bitterness and a base rigidity.

The entry is quoted in the translator's Introduction. Richard Greeman has done a commendable job in supplying an outline of Serge's life. In an afterword, Greeman discusses the meaning of the novel and Serge's work, and he quotes Rosa Luxemburg, "Every revolution is doomed to failure, except the last one."

Serge died in 1947. We can only suppose what his reaction would have been to the uprisings in Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and Poland (in the book, characters discuss the possibility of uprisings in Russia . . . without much conviction). Thirty-six years is a long time. And Serge might have changed his mind. On Greeman's evidence, he probably would not. But a peaceful transition to democracy in Spain? That, I think, would have surprised him.

Greeman is engaged in writing a full-scale biography of Serge, translating Serge's books into English, and trying to revive those previously translated. Greeman closes this book with the notation that Serge "is buried as a 'Spanish Republican' in the French section of the Mexico City cemetery." The book's illustrations are by Vlady, Serge's son, an artist in Mexico. □

NOTEBOOK *(continued from page 129)*

mass society. The Elect may be a hidden member of that mass society. He's of no direct political consequence: you can never find him to crown him.

There are only three ways the doctrine of Election and Damnation *can* be translated into politics; or, rather, only three ways it can inform unspoken assumptions within the *polis*:

(1) You can long for an oligarchy of the Elect. But the search committee would have to be divinely wise, and would most certainly be swamped by confident applicants. (2) You can simply settle for an Elite. Or, (3) You can accept a sort of democracy of the Damned, and a few hidden Elect, and feel at least a little complimented that even so demanding a man as Jonathan Edwards knew that ordinary people, with their fractured motives and adoptive virtues, were responsible for the greater part of the moral action of the world. □

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LETTERS

A Time of "Failed Democracy"

Editors:

I have been much interested in your article by Michael Walzer on "Failed Totalitarianism" in the Summer 83 *Dissent*. It has set me to thinking that possibly we (in the U.S.) are living in a period of somewhat "Failed Democracy." What words better describe the era of Reaganism both at home and abroad? The drop-off of voter and citizen participation and the great corruption and cynicism of so much in our corporate and military policy—not to mention the "Pentagonese" of our English language? Our right wing (from Jerry Falwell to George Will) wishes to regulate our personal behavior in a sort of authoritarian mold—while at the same time allowing the utmost in corporate lawlessness and even chaos in society, and leaving the poor gasping and the rich enriching themselves.

The public wants a "leader" who will tell them what to do *if* they want to hear what he may choose to say. But if he should have some genuinely innovative and idealistic ideas, they simply will not elect him (at least generally). Their hearts may not be cold—at least not yet—but their minds are certainly too fuzzy to be doing any good job of making that democracy we do have work.

How to do any effective job of public education in our social priorities is a very acute question; also a very tough one. I do not have the answer, I fear. But I do know that some sort of reactivation of our democratic priorities is essential if we are to avoid a sort of casual authoritarianism ourselves. Or a descent into another sort of "failed system" of our own.

Ann Hubbell
Ypsilanti, Mich. □

"A Path for America"

Editors:

In a letter in the Spring 1983 *Dissent* (addressing Michael Harrington's article, "A Path for America"), David Bensman argues convincingly that American democratic socialists must "think in global terms" and "fashion a political strategy to mobilize the mass of American workers to a program for a 'new international economic order.' " Unfortunately, Bensman does not emphasize enough the importance of ending absolute poverty, which is *the* moral imperative of this era. Certainly, the international monetary and trading regimes should be restructured so as to give developing countries (both middle-income and low-income) more power; and, of course, we should drastically curb the ability of multinational corporations to cross frontiers in pursuit of the lowest taxes and highest profits. But such measures do not guarantee any reduction in absolute poverty; they must be coupled with massive efforts to meet the essential needs of the world's poorest billion people.

Absolute poverty in the late 20th century is an obscenity: its eradication must be the highest priority of any serious program for global economic reform.

Louis F. Cooper
Washington, D.C. □

Central America

Editors:

I have read, with a mixture of pleasure and dismay, Irving Howe's "Central America — Cry Halt!" (*Dissent*, Summer 1983). It is hard to know how to respond to something that so thoroughly combines eloquent denunciation of the brutal and stupid U.S. policy of military intervention with such a large dose of traditional liberal misperceptions.

Yes, the U.S. should keep its hands off (and its weapons out of) Nicaragua. But the reason for such a policy should have nothing to do with using economic blackmail to coerce Nicaragua into "easing domestic repression and adopting a nonaligned policy." First, it is distressing to see *Dissent* parrot Reaganite charges of Nicaraguan political repression, as if it were *National Review* or the *New Republic*. What evidence can *Dissent* offer that any other nation in Central America has as good a record of political tolerance (especially at such a difficult moment) as that of Nicaragua? Second, can *Dissent* give us a list, even a very short list, of countries in the Western Hemisphere that have done a better job than Nicaragua in remaining nonaligned? Where the Sandinista government has been forced out of this posture, the primary responsibility lies in Washington, not in Managua.

In addition, I am appalled at the inference that the left and the right in El Salvador are equally to be regarded as "killers and terrorists." Where on earth do you people get your information? Ask Amnesty International, or the ACLU, or Clergy and Laity Concerned, or any other responsible investigative group what they think of this equation.

Finally, it is fascinating that you choose to end with a

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blind endorsement of the Contadora strategy. Has *Dissent* become the mouthpiece for liberal holdouts in the State Department? Or more likely, have you begun taking too literally the mainstream journalism to which many of us would like to see you as an alternative?

STEPHEN M. SOIFFER
Cortland, New York

IRVING HOWE Replies:

Costa Rica has a far better "record of political tolerance" than the present regime in Nicaragua.

There is neither a statement nor an inference in my piece that the left and right "are equally to be regarded as 'killers and terrorists.' " But that important elements of the guerrilla forces are authoritarian in character and have not hesitated to use terrorist methods against opponents within their own camp is by now a commonly known fact—for overwhelming evidence, see the article by Gabriel Zaid, "Enemy Colleagues" in the Winter 1982 *Dissent*.

What would Mr. Soiffer propose in opposition to the Contadora strategy—an indefinite prolongation of the civil war in El Salvador?

For further information on Latin America, our correspondent should read *Democracy and Dictatorship in Latin America*, a booklet of essays by Latin American writers who oppose dictatorships of both right and left. (See the ad on the inside back cover.) □

Emma Goldman

Editors:

Karen Rosenberg's article on Emma Goldman (*Dissent*, Summer 1983) seems to have the object of damning Emma with faint praise. Also, to characterize her emotions and their expression as "Victorian" is, in the atmosphere of contemporary Britain, an unfortunate phrase in the light of Prime Minister Thatcher's espousal of "Victorian values."

Emma stayed with my wife and me in 1937. She impressed us immensely although we were not anarchists but members of the Labour party. She had a similar effect upon other young socialists in our city. Her purpose in being here was to address a meeting on the Spanish Revolution, especially to expose the Stalinists and their role in contributing to the defeat of the Republican cause. The meeting was called by a local group of anarchists, anti-Stalinist members of the Labour party, and members of the Independent Labour party associated with the Spanish POUM.

It is easy to decry the apparent failure of anarchism to maintain a mass following on a world scale. It is possible to attribute this to an inherent defect in the theory. Nevertheless, anarchists should be listened to. From Bakunin onward, they have warned against excessive centralization of political organizations, against tendencies exaggerating state power, and against the fetishism of the party. They have a part to play and, given a democratic basis for the socialist movement, will continue to play it.

Emma was an authentic revolutionary with a profound passion for human liberation, head and shoulders above the contemporary leaders of the British labor movement with whom we were only too familiar. To have her written off as a sentimental eccentric, which is the general tenor of Rosenberg's article, is a disservice not only to Emma herself, but to the historical record.

ALEX RUDLING
Norwich, England □

Encouragement

Editors:

A short note to congratulate you on the quality of the Summer 1983 issue. I've read most of it and it is extremely good—everything from Walzer's fine essay to Corradi's extraordinary review of Didion's *Salvador*.

The issue is a tribute to the intellectual richness of contemporary American democratic socialism and to the nuances, breadth, and texture of its many concerns.

Please keep up the good work.

RICK VALLELY
Belmont, Mass. □

Against the Democrats

Editors:

Thomas E. Weisskopf's "Reaganomics: Is It Finally Working?" (*Dissent*, Fall 1983), is an excellent economic analysis of the relative weakness of the current economic recovery in comparison with those of previous years. I must, however, disagree with his political

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conclusion—namely, that we must elect a Democrat to the presidency in 1984.

There is nothing wrong with Mr. Weisskopf's ideas. But will *any* Democratic presidential candidate call for them?

Listen closely to what Walter Mondale is calling for with respect to the military. He wants to *increase* military spending 3 percent a year over inflation. John Glenn is calling for a 6 percent *increase* over inflation. This year Congress passed Reagan's 5 percent increase in military spending. I don't see a whole lot of difference between these figures. All three of the top contenders want to *increase* military spending. What about the other Democratic challengers? Is Cranston a peacemaker? He has been a consistent supporter of the B–1 bomber. Hart has been ambivalent in his votes on new weapons systems. Hollings, during the 1979 and 1980 budget sessions, led the fight in the Senate to *increase* the Pentagon budget 2 percent more than Reagan's own request! . . .

And even if the Democrats ran someone like Rep. Ronald Dellums on a platform of reducing military spending, repealing the tax breaks for the rich, and favoring workplace democracy, would that be enough to heal our ailing economy? I don't think so. For capitalism would still exist, and it is very much the capitalist system itself that is at fault. . . .

The only way to end the continuing structural weaknesses in our economy is to replace the capitalist system with democratic socialism. That can't begin to happen until we liberate ourselves from the false belief that supporting Democratic party politicians in any way advances the democratic socialist movement. . . .

You may not like what I am about to say, for it implies a very rough road indeed: We can't solve our economic and social problems by liberal reforms of capitalism. If we try, we are going to be ultimately disappointed with the results. . . . Voting for liberal Democrats is an easy path to follow; we can tell ourselves that by doing so we are making *some* progress. But, in reality, we are only perpetuating a bad system.

Building a viable democratic socialist party in this country is very hard work. . . . Nevertheless, false consciousness, even among the left, cannot last forever.

DONALD F. BUSKY
Philadelphia □

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